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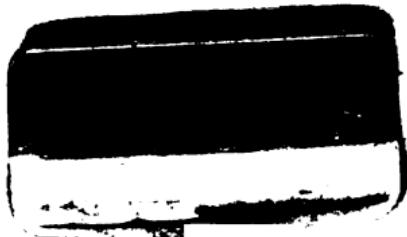
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BY

SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.

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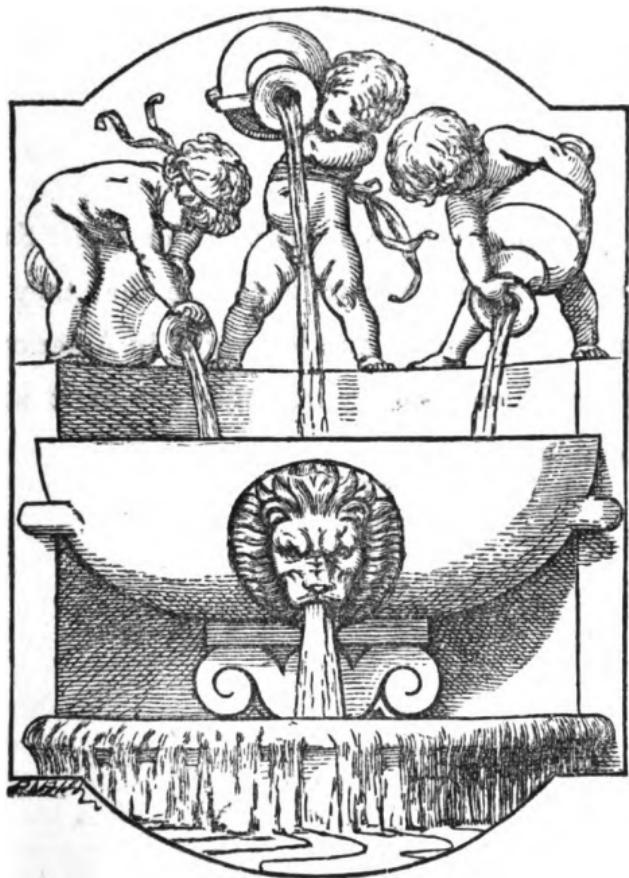
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Third Series.

EIGHTH NIGHT.

"TURLOGH," said Hugh Roe, when the Princes and their faithful entertainer were again assembled, "did you ever drive a prey?"

"I have been at the lifting of cattle enough to stock the great Moy of Mayo, in my time, O'Donnell," replied Turlogh; "we drove two preys out of O'Connor Faly's country last summer; and it was the crossing of the Nore by the last one that was in my mind when I told you of the breach of Graig."

"I remember," said Art, "when I was in the Clanebuys with Turlogh Lynagh, before he had learned to love Scots and Saxons better than his own flesh and blood;—and for every link of the chains his treachery has cast me into, may he have the curse of the captive upon his head before he dies!—but, as I said, it was then that we made a prey upon the English of Carrickfergus, that I remember well, though I was but a boy at the time. Turlogh himself did not join in that adventure: it was Brian MacPhelimy Baccagh headed it: and I and five of the Clan Gallagher were the only men of the Muinter Lynagh that were with him. I remember it well! We started across the country from Edenduffcarrick at sunset; and, long before day, were down between the Knockagh and the shore, where the churls had their cattle in a strong enclosure, by the little river side that there runs into the sea. Ah, kinsmen, it would have done your hearts good to have seen the booty we drove off, and hardly a stroke

being struck—for the boddagh knaves, when they heard us getting over the bawn, ran for the town, without waiting even to do on their hose. So we drove out the creaght upon the path to Bealfarsad, thinking of getting them into Killultagh before sun-rise; and much work we had to keep them together in the darkness and open country. Well, we had hardly got them clear of the bawn, when we heard the guns in Carrick castle firing for the pursuit. We pricked the bullocks forward with our spears, as fast and silently as we could, and Brian and his brother Neale went back with twenty of their best men to cover the rere. By the time we were on the rise of Carnmoney, we heard the drums of the English in the hollow behind; but the night was so dark, they often mistook the road we had taken, and once or twice we thought they were off our track altogether, though we could see the lights they carried, at every turn, twinkling through the woods like Wills-o'-the-wisp, and some cried that they heard the voices of slot-hounds. But the cattle were not to be urged up the steep without heavy driving, and, do our best, we could not top the ridge of the hill, till Brian and his men had been once or twice at blows with the pursuers. They had issued out in such numbers that our twenty galloglass had to be again and again reinforced before we crossed the valley between that and Ben-Madigan—for we had left the shore, and were heading into the country—but when we came at last to the great bog behind Collon-Ward, both Neale and Brian were fairly driven in upon the prickers, and the fight was carried on at the very tails of the beasts. I was but a boy, and they would not let me strike in before; but I had to take to my weapon now, and play my part as best I could; for though the main body of the English was not yet come up, we were overmatched for a while, even

by their advanced guard. By this, the grey of the morning was just beginning to show the shapes of objects, and, in a pause of the struggle, I could see that we were in a black boggy hollow of the hills, and that the ground we fought on seemed a narrow stripe of pasture in the middle of the morass. The drivers, one by one, had been brought to blows, and the cattle were running on through mere terror, and taking what path they pleased. The hard ground on which we fought, was, as I have said, a stripe confined by a bog at either side; and I thought I could see that it divided at one point of the retreat: but the creaght still kept before us, and we still found our hands too full to mind much beside our own defence. I gave and took as much that one night as I have done ever since, and put it all together; but at last, when I saw Brian himself, and Manus Mor O'Gallagher, turn their backs, I was fain to throw myself, like the rest, among the herd, and seek my escape as best I might. I expected to get on the clear ground in front of the prey, and so make my way out of the bog, which was too soft on both sides to attempt a passage—for many of the cattle had already sunk up to their bellies where they had slipped or strayed from the path—but when I got among the foremost bullocks, *hullaloo!*—we were at the end of the hard land!—some of the poor beasts, pushed on by the rush behind, were over their backs in the flow, and the prickers and galloglass, with cries and curses, were reining back their horses, or slipping and floundering on its verge. “*Dar dioul!* we have taken the wrong road!” cried Neale MacPhelimy; “Shawn Garv Magee, you have let the creaght go the wrong road!” “Neale Uaisle! I was fighting for my life!” cried the herdsman; but as he spoke, the chief thrust him through with his skene. Shawn Garv dropped like a lump of lead into the

black quagmire, and Neale, with the bloody weapon in his hand, shouted—" Back, back to the middle of the prey, every man ! Prick them on with spear and sword !—stab them, flank and brisket !—if the bog was a mile to the bottom we have bullocks enough to bridge it over !" It was the only resource left us : the English had us cut off, and to fight through a column twenty men deep, and armed to the teeth, was not to be thought of by the few exhausted galloglass that were left. We drove the poor brutes in : God knows it was a horrible sight, in that indistinct light, to see the black pit heaving like a pot of boiling pitch, as they wallowed and writhed through it, moaning and bellowing, that it was dreadful to hear. Many of our men were lost, for they were slippery stepping stones ! I rolled through, I hardly know how, but I was light, and though I stuck twice or three times, I got over at last. Brian, too, escaped, and Manus Mor , but Neale was trodden down by the cattle, and never got out. We now had the bog between us and the English, unless they chose to walk over their own beasts to follow us, and so took to the hill with what force remained, and never stopped till we reached Brian Carragh's country about noon. That was the only prey I was ever at the driving of : I was then a boy ; but I remember it all as well as if it had been yesterday."

" The churls thought they had you in a trap," said Hugh ; " how they must have stared to find what sort of road you travelled by, when the day broke ! I never drove a prey ; but, with God's permission, before the summer goes by, I'll empty some of their creaghts upon the western Pale ! "

" For my part," said Henry, " I think lifting cattle no such heroic achievement. Bearing away a fair Saxon damsel now, or carrying off a score of noble hostages,

would seem to me a worthier exploit: but meeting the enemy in the light of day, and winning our rights at the point of the sword, on the open field, that is the service in which I would fain strike a stroke before I die!"

"Henry, you have the soul of a noble gentleman!" cried Hugh, "but you mistake my purpose. Before we meet the enemy in the field, we must have an army of disciplined soldiers in the camp. My clansmen, on my return—if I should ever see sweet Ballyshannon again!—will be better hands at a foray than a pitched battle: if I can but maintain my ground for one poor twelve-month by such means, until opportunity shall have begot discipline, I will show you an army, at the head of which I shall not be ashamed to meet the Queen's veteran power on any plain in Christendom! But, Turlogh, with what tale do you mean to while away the hours to-night?"

"*Dar mo lamh*, O'Donnell, if Art Oge can but tell us such scenes in the Clanebuys, till bed-time, you will need no tale of mine to make you forget your chains," said Turlogh.

"Alas, I have no skill in such descriptions," said Art. "I have nothing more worth telling that you have not heard already; but Turlogh has such store of tales and romances, that whether you would hear of feud or friendship, love, mystery, or magic, he can match your wishes with some story of Hibernian times. I, for my own part, would fain hear something of the feuds among the English of the pale; for, by the crowning stone of Dungannon, it makes me sick to think of our own!"

"Come then, Turlogh Buy," cried Hugh, "tell us how *Tomás-an-Teeda*, the bold Fitzgerald, set our Saxon lords by the ears in the late king's reign."

"With all the veins of my heart, noble princes," replied Turlogh; "and the readier because I know a tale

made on that very event, by a gentleman who was present in it. It will be a longer story than I have told you yet; for it contains the fortunes of some others, besides the arch-rebel himself."

"It is a pity the Clan-Gerald was not of Irish blood," said Hugh; "they have ever been a race of brave gentlemen, and sharp thorns in the side of the invaders."

"They are more Irish than English by ten generations to one," replied Henry, "and it is the same with Mac William Burke, and the clan Butler. But let us to our tale; and, Turlogh, take time, and run it not into such close compass as to lose the best of your matter, as you did in the "Captive of Killeshin." *Dar Columb!* your knight and lady had not words enough together to justify a colleen's courtship with a *buachal na mo!*"

"Ah, noble Henry," cried the old man, "'tis long since I sat, myself, by the side of a colleen dhas, talking the sweet words of honey that I spoke too easily ever to remember: it is not what a man says readiest in the reality, that he tells freest in its recounting. Could your nobleness repeat all that the *duine Uaile Oge* said to the daughter of MacMahon that summer evening in the wood of Truagh, when—"

"Say no more, Turlogh," cried Henry blushing; "I'll let you off with the courtship; for I see O'Donnell burning to be at blows, and my brother Art longing to hear of the silk jackets of *Tomás-an-Teeda's* galloglass."

"Then we will suppose the courtship over, and introduce the lovers without more ado," said Turlogh with a smile, and addressed himself to his tale.

THE REBELLION OF SILKEN THOMAS.

IN Dublin, near to Dame's Gate, lived, in 1534, a wealthy merchant, by name Paul Dudley. His house, built on the bank of the Liffey, overlooked a wharf at which one or more of his barques might be seen receiving or discharging cargo. Merchandise and nautical stores lay piled or scattered about the busy area of the courtyard, and the arched entrance resounded to the tramp of draught horses and the rattling of ponderous waggon wheels. Thus, towards the river, all was business and bustle; but southward, between his house and the secluded street it fronted, was a quiet garden, well planted and enclosed, and stretching in broad parterres and deep shrubberies almost to the city wall.

It was a bright June morning, and the sun shone sweetly on the flowers and foliage; the birds sang in every tree; and a thrush, notwithstanding the presence of two persons on the rustic bench below, warbled loudly from her accustomed branch, over the great honeysuckle arbour. The occupants of the summer-house were a young man and maiden: they had sat there so long that the birds were grown familiar with them. They were lovers, as the maiden's conscious blushes and the eager looks of the cavalier confessed. Their loves were sanctioned, for they betrayed no clandestine apprehension; their looks were those of heaven's most favoured creatures, perfectly happy in mutual confidence and affection.

"And now, my sweet Ellen," said the wooer, "my joy is so complete, that I think I can never be unhappy again."

"Indeed, Sir John," said his companion, "I knew not

that you were unhappy; had you known my heart, you would have had little cause to be so."

"Dear Ellen," he cried, "you make me belie myself: I am again unhappy; for I feel that you suspect me of having doubted you. No, dearest, I could not distrust your true heart; but I confess I did dread, lest, in my absence, some other might find means to influence your father against our union; and although I would deem myself rich enough in your love alone, to disregard all other fortunes for my own part, yet, trust me, I would rather see my right hand cut off, than know you subjected to one harsh word or unkind look from your parent on my account. If that villain, Parez, has poisoned your father's ear, as I have reason to suspect, I vow by Saint Bernard——"

"Thou hast been deceived:—in sooth, Sir John, and on my word, some one hath belied my father to thee," cried the lady earnestly; "Master Parez's suit sped not worse with me than with my father. He is a plain man, and a trader——"

"Nay, dear Ellen, forgive me," said the knight; "I feel I have done your father wrong; he has still shown himself a kind friend to me; and doubt of his good-will could never have found a place in my thoughts, if I had not been at a distance from you; for when absent from you, Ellen, there was but one bright image in my mind: all the rest was dark and wretched."

"I have long wished, Sir John," said the lady, "to tell thee more of my father; and, I pray thee, think me not importunate to dwell on this. Indeed, Sir John, thou knowest him not. They say he hath preferred thee to others, for the sake of ennobling his riches by thy lineage: indeed they do him great wrong. He loves thee for thyself; believe me he doth. He is not a man to make many

fair professions ; but, blunt as thou hast thought him, he bears a warm and a true heart towards thee. It was but yesterday I heard him urge thy deserts on the Archbishop, with whom he hath much influence,"

" Dear Ellen," said the knight, " I feel it all, and love you the better for what you have said. For your father's good offices with Archbishop Alan, he has my gratitude ; but I fear the friend of Lord Thomas Fitzgerald has little chance of favour with the old enemy of Kildare. I would I knew how the brave Earl speeds at the court of England ! "

" I know little of the cause of anger between the Archbishop and the Lord Deputy," said the lady ; " but I have heard such whispers among the Primate's friends who frequent my father's house for loans and aids of ships and merchandize, as make me tremble, both for the Earl and his son, whom he hath left in his stead. Would to heaven, you were no longer associated with young Lord Thomas ! "

" Lord Thomas is a brave and generous gentleman," cried the knight ; " his father, the Earl, was the friend and protector of my youth ; their noble house has ever been allied both by blood and mutual service to my own, and I were a recreant and base churl to shrink from their quarrel, whether it be with Bishop or King ! Forgive me, again, sweet Ellen, that I forget your father's friendship for the Primate in my own love and loyalty to the bold Geraldine."

Ellen Dudley yielded him her hand in token of the easily accorded pardon ; but the truth was, she had spoken as much on the impulse of her judgment as of her feelings, and an involuntary predilection for the cause of her lover's friends, was already converting her forgiveness to sympathy, if not approval, when her father appeared at the

upper end of the garden coming towards them from the house.

Paul Dudley was an aged man, of a careful aspect, attired in sad coloured apparel somewhat faded, such as a rich citizen could afford to gratify his humility on. He advanced, and welcomed his elected son-in-law, with a grave cordiality suitable to his age and character ; "Sir John, thou art welcome," he said ; "I am heartily glad to see thee again. Thou wilt excuse my delay, for I had with me certain contractors, when I heard of thy arrival, whom I might not sooner leave. Ellen, my child, go gather a dish of cherries while I and Sir John fetch a walk here in the sunshine."

Ellen retired with a glance of glad meaning at her lover, and the knight and merchant walked arm-in-arm down the garden. "Sir John," said Dudley, "I am a man of few words. When my daughter marries, I mean that she shall be lodged as suits the station of a lady ; mine is a spare and frugal household, and would ill suit a nobleman's necessary retinue. I have, therefore, purchased a more commodious dwelling, with lands enough for its honourable maintenance, which shall be thine on thy wedding-day. Disert Castle is a strong pile, and I look to see it well manned against the Irish. The chief service of thy tenure will be to protect the Archbishop's rangers, and furnish a riding-out of twenty horsemen yearly, on Saint John's day, to the prior of Kilmainham."

"Master Dudley," said the knight, "I will be frank with thee ; when friends were scarcest with my father, the Earl of Kildare stood by him, with purse and countenance, aye, even to the peril of his own head ; when I was left an orphan he had me cared for as if I had been his own son ; by his bounty I am educated as becomes my

birth; from his honoured hand I hold my degree of knighthood. I cannot render service to the enemies of such a benefactor. On my honour, Master Dudley, it grieves me to seem thus disposed to cavil at thy most generous proffer; but if thine own father had had so true a friend, and that friend so bitter an enemy, say, couldst thou thyself, if sought to take such service, act otherwise?"

"Say no more, Sir John—say no more—the tenure shall be altered; thou shalt hold *in capite*, and serve none but the King. I am not a man to be easily moved from my purpose; yet surely I can see a hardship, and peradventure feel for an honourable scruple; nay, I would the more readily redress the one, Sir John, because I respect the other."

The merchant spoke with an honest sincerity which could not be mistaken; a tear glistened in the knight's eye as he grasped his hand—"Master Dudley, I thank thee from my heart. By my honour, I am even more beholden to thee for this consideration than for the bounty it confirms. I will hold Disert for the King right joyfully; aye, and call me churl if I keep not such goodly garrison as will make the passes of the Pale, when thou shalt come to see me, as safe for thy trotting nag as the highway over Hoggin Green."

"Enough said, Sir John, I know well that thou bearest no ungrateful mind; but there is another matter touching which I would now talk with thee. Thou art young and ardent; when there are as many grey hairs in thy beard as in mine, thou wilt not hold thy manhood's interest so light when weighed against thy youth's friendships; but I am not accustomed to waste words on idle hints; I will tell thee plainly, thy attachment to Kildare and his faction will plague thee yet, if thou keep it not in more discreet

bounds. The Earl, I tell thee, is in disgrace at Court ; his son, our ruffling Deputy, has offended every lord of the Council here, by his pride and violence ; not a day passes without injury and complaint ; the King is enraged against both father and son, and Sir William Skeffington is striving hard to get the sword of office to himself. Now, I will not say to thee, as others might, that a wise man should keep clear of a falling house, and that thou oughtest to desert thy friends in this extremity ; for I think there is in thee that constancy and nobility of nature which would spurn so unworthy a course, even if I did give thee that base advice. No ; if by the reverse of fortune Lord Thomas or his father stand in need of such help as one of thy estate may lawfully bestow, spare not my coffers in their service ; for I would not have a child of mine lie under painful obligation where gold might lighten the burden on his mind ; but what I ask of thee is this ; while thou shrinkest not from rendering all the kindly gratitude and lawful aid that a man may yield to his benefactor, without trenching on his duty to his King, shun the society of these rebellious conspirators who surround Lord Thomas, keep thy allegiance free from all contamination of traitorous suggestions ; but above all, if the frantic pride of the young Deputy do drive him into open treason, let no power of mistaken friendship or chivalrous devotion persuade thee for a moment to lend connivance or countenance to an attempt so desperate !—I am a peaceful man, loyal to the King and desirous of good order in the State ; thou art about to become my son and the successor to my riches ; do what reasonable, what lawful friendship requires, but bring not destruction on an honest house, and disgrace on the grey hairs of one who is willing to love thee as his own son ! ”

“ On my honour, Master Dudley, I know not why thou

shouldst distrust my loyalty. I am the servant of the King ; I have both given and taken hard blows under his banner ; against whom have I ever fought if not against his enemies ? God forbid that my noble benefactor should ever need the service of my sword against our common Sovereign ; but, by your hand, Master Dudley, this is some calumny of the Earl spread by his and the Lord Thomas's enemies. I never heard of other design among either them or their retainers, than to support the Royal authority or defend themselves against their private enemies ; and I freely promise thee I will not strike a stroke on their behalf in any other quarrel."

"It is enough," said the merchant, "I trust to thine own candour and generosity ; there is that in my heart which tells me thou wilt not deceive me."

"A man overwhelmed with obligation must make his promises with as bad a grace as his acknowledgments ; I can but say, Master Dudley, I thank thee, and will do my best to show myself not unworthy thy good opinion."

"And that is all I ask," cried Dudley ; "I am now satisfied in all things. Go to my daughter, Sir John, and settle what day you please to end the wooing. God bless them both !" he exclaimed, as the knight disappeared down the green alley which led to the orchard ; "and God be praised who has bountifully given me two such children to bless ! Surely my heart should be at ease at last. Here are the two now dearest to me in this world happy ; all around me is pleasant and cheerful—strange ! I have not marked the singing of the birds for many a year until to-day ! Ah Paul Dudley what hast thou been dreaming of so long, not to know what a comfort thou hadst at hand in the sunny walks of thine own garden ? By my faith, I feel young, I cannot tell how. What need have I of a staff ?—lie there thou halt companion !"

—and he cast away his gold-headed cane, and walked up and down, smoothing the grey locks from his forehead and turning up his face to the breeze with a long unwonted sense of buoyant enjoyment.

The tramp of horses sounding from the street roused Dudley from a train of happier anticipations than had perhaps occupied his thoughts since the eve of his own nuptials; but ere he had enquired who were the new comers, his child and destined son were seen approaching.

"Oh, my dear father," cried Ellen, as he folded her fondly in his arms, "how can we thank thee for all thy goodness?" and she hid her blushing face on his breast.

"Love each other, my children," cried the happy old man, "love each other, and I am well repaid!" so saying he joined their hands and blessed them fervently.

It was while Paul Dudley was thus ratifying his approval of his daughter's marriage, that an armed man advanced from the house towards the arbour, in front of which they stood. Whether it was that his aspect was habitually forbidding or that he disliked his present errand, the stranger wore a black look from the moment he entered the garden: but when, on turning into the walk that gave him a full view of the scene before the summerhouse, he caught the first glance of Ellen Dudley in the arms of another, and her father standing by, he stopped for a moment, and drew back as if his eyes had been blasted—gripping to his dagger, and actually reeling, like a man stunned by a heavy blow. In an instant, however, he recovered himself: his hand slid down from his belt, and his brow relaxed into comparative smoothness: still as he advanced, there was a cloud on his dark features and an inequality in his step, that told of the recent fit of passion. When Dudley saw him coming towards them, he advanced to meet him, although, from

the evident dislike that marked his manner, it was plainly more for the sake of taking his scowling eyes off the knight and lady, than from any wish to show him a marked courtesy.

"Master Perez," said he, "I bid thee a good Morrow: hast thou any commands for me?"

"I come, Master Dudley," replied the ominous stranger, "on an errand that will not much increase thy love for me. I bear a packet for the hands of yonder knight, whom I have sought in vain at guard-room and barbican, and now find toying with fair damsels in thy arbour. I have besides a message, by word of mouth, for Sir John Talbot."

"Ah, Master Perez," said the merchant, "thou art the man to do thy errand, without scruple for place or time. But go on, man; give the knight thy letter, and say what thou hast to say; for, though I be hurried, yet I would have thee take a cup of wine with me before thou goest, till I tell thee of some danger to thy friends that it behoves thee to know."

"I thank thee, Master Dudley," said Perez; "but no wine shall cross my lips to-day; and as for the Lord Deputy's danger, let his enemies look to themselves." With this churlish answer on his lips, he advanced to the knight, and said, "I have sought thee in vain, Sir John, both at the Newgate and at thy company's quarters, and would not have broken in on thy privacy here, had my orders not been so urgent as they are. The Lord Thomas Fitzgerald commends him to thee, and sends thee for thy perusal this letter, which Sir John De La Hyde had this morning of him to whom it is addressed—a friar, whose friend writes from London, as thou mayest read."

As Perez spoke, his eyes were fixed on Sir John Talbot with an expression of mixed malignity and triumph. The

knight bent a fixed glance on him, in return, as he took the packet from his hands ; but was soon too deeply interested in its contents to care whether his angry rival scowled or smiled upon him. But scarcely had he read half through the first page, when the colour fled from his cheeks, and large drops of perspiration burst out over his forehead. “Parez !” he cried, and gasped a moment for utterance ; then, as the blood rushed back to his brow, he seized the messenger fiercely by the arm—“Parez ! by heaven, if I thought you came here to triumph over my ruin, I would send thy soul to hell at my dagger’s point !”

“I come here to do my duty, Sir John Talbot,” replied Perez, subduing a smile that was already beginning to attest how much he enjoyed the agony of his rival ; “and that duty done, I wait to know whether thou art equally prepared to do thine.”

“Thou, at least, shalt never report me a recreant !” cried Talbot. “Leave me ; I know what thou wouldest say : I will be with Lord Thomas in an hour.”

“An hour, Sir John ! My lord did not expect to find his friends so slack at this pinch.”

“Parez, leave me. You have your revenge : you see me ruined. If there be a heart in your breast, stay not here to torture me ! if you love your life, Christopher Perez, go ! I will follow you.”

Parez’s eye glanced for a moment to the arbour, where Ellen Dudley had sunk, pale as ashes, on a seat : but, at a motion of the knight’s hand to his dagger, accompanying a fiercer repetition of the command to withdraw, he turned sullenly upon his heel, and retired. Talbot’s energy, before which the ignoble nature of Perez had thus quailed, deserted him as he turned to the arbour, where his affianced bride, with a beating heart awaited the issue of their ominous conference. She rose as he

entered. "Thou art pale, Sir John; thy hands are cold as ice. Mother of Mercy! what has the wretch done to make thee look so ghastly?"

"Ellen, I am a ruined man! They have murdered the Earl."

"Who have murdered? what Earl? for pity's sake, look not so!"

"The King has murdered the Earl of Kildare, Ellen; and Lord Thomas has—has sent to let me know."

She laid her hand on his, which was clenched and convulsively pressed on his knee. "Oh, Sir John," she said, "believe me how I feel for thy affliction; but take comfort; it pains my heart to see thee grieve so sorely; perhaps this news may be untrue."

"No, no, Ellen; it is all too sure: it has been too long and too deeply planned to leave any chance of failure when the blow was to be struck. The letter is positive; Kildare was beheaded in the Tower on Saint Swithin's eve."

"Alas, what had they against him? was he not ever a loyal subject of the King?"

"Treason, Ellen; they charged him with treason, which his heart could no more conceive than it could malice or untruth. But I cannot talk of this now; my soul within me cries for vengeance when I think of it."

"Dear Sir John," said Ellen, "I feel, and from my heart I deplore, this misfortune; but do not, I beseech you, look so despairingly: you have lost a generous benefactor; but believe me, you have found new friends, if not so noble or so powerful, fully as willing to serve and love you."

"Ellen, I have lost both!"

"Oh, no, no; say not so; do me not that wrong; do not so wrong my father."

SER. III.

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"Ellen, you are the truest hearted, but alas, the most hapless maiden that ever clung to man in his misfortunes ! You know not to whom you would vow your fidelity. Yet I call God to witness that nothing short of this cruel execution could have driven me into insurrection. It was murder, cold-blooded and cruel murder ; and if ever rebellion was justified before Heaven, it is ours against that treacherous and cowardly tyrant, who has thus wantonly spilled the blood of the kindest and most gallant gentleman that ever drew sword in his cause." She looked piteously in his face, and burst into tears. " You may weep now, Ellen ; the worst is told—I am a rebel. The friends of my slaughtered benefactor are up in arms, and I will not fail them in this extremity. God, who knows my heart, knows with what grief and wretchedness my soul is filled since I made up my mind to leave you—you, who were my comfort in all sorrow before, on whom every hope that I had to cheer me in this world was fixed—for, Ellen, I feel at this moment that I have loved you far more dearly than the thoughts of a man who has not felt such grief as mine to-day could ever have conceived. Dear, indeed, as my own soul, far, far dearer than my life, is the love of Ellen Dudley in my heart's core for ever. But, Ellen, my love were worthless and unworthy, and I a wretch debased in the eyes of all brave men, if I loved not honour better than either life or love. I go, Ellen, dearest ; I must leave you. Oh, my God ! I may never press these lips again ; I may never again fold that true heart to mine ! Speak, my beloved ; tell me, are you then lost to me for ever ? "

"Never, dearest ! I will never forsake you," she murmured. He clasped her closer to his breast, and bent over her, kissing away her tears.

At this moment voices sounded from the garden. "I

tell thee, Sir, he cannot have said so ! It is scarce half an hour since Sir John promised me with his own lips to abjure for ever the broils and treasons of thy turbulent faction." The speaker was Paul Dudley, high in wrath, disputing the passage of Perez to the arbour. When the lovers heard their voices, they tore themselves asunder. Ellen sat down, almost fainting, in the green recess ; but Talbot came forth, prepared to go through with the sacrifice—for he felt that it was little better—come what might.

"Sir John Talbot," cried Dudley when he saw him, "here is a traitor in arms against the King, avowing his rebellion, and seeking to implicate thee in the same villainy; nay, boasting that thou art his abettor in the treason."

"There is little in common between me and Master Perez," replied Talbot; "yet in this cause we are companions."

"In what cause, Sir John ? In God's name, what means this conniving between thee and an open rebel ?"

"Master Dudley," cried Talbot, "knowest thou that the noble Earl of Kildare has been basely murdered by that arch-heretic and cruel tyrant, who was yesterday my King ; and dost thou marvel that I am about to take up arms for vengeance on the enemies of my benefactor ?"

"If thou be in arms against the Royal Majesty, thou art a foresworn traitor, Sir John Talbot !" cried Dudley ; "thou hast deceived me, and, villain, thou hast stolen the affections and ruined the peace of my child ! for I would rather see her dead, than wedded to an outlawed robber, as thou wilt shortly be. Ho, Giles and Watkin, Jeniko and Gregory ! stand by your master, ye knaves ; lay hands on the rebels ; ten pieces of gold to him who

secures the traitor Talbot ! ” and weaponless as he was, he threw himself upon the armed knight as boldly as if he had himself been cased in steel and bounding in the vigour of youth : but his men, seeing the house surrounded by Perez’s troop, and confident that, however their enraged master might rave against his old favourite, he did not at heart desire his injury, held back ; and the old man, exhausted by contending emotions, and overcome by unusual exertion, fell, almost powerless into the arms of him whom he had sought to pull to the ground.

“ Forgive me, Master Dudley ; forgive me, my father ! ” cried Talbot, as he consigned the tottering merchant to the arms of his daughter, who had come from her retreat the moment she heard her father’s voice summoning his servants to ineffectual violence, and now half forgot her own grief in alarm for her parent’s safety.

When Dudley heard himself called by the name of fathér, and saw the knight turn away when that appeal obtained no answer, he was stirred with strong feelings of affection and pity. “ Come back, come back, and I will forgive thee everything, ” he cried, while tears burst from his eyes, and his voice trembled with emotion. “ Thou art still my son, if thou wilt but shun thine own destruction. Return, return to thy allegiance : it is not yet too late to repent and save thyself ! Oh, Sir John, for thine own sake, for pity to my grey hairs, and as a last appeal, as thou wouldest not break the heart of this innocent girl, do not yield to this madness, to this fearful and dishonouring sin ! ”

“ May God have pity on me ! ” cried Talbot ; “ for this is a sore trial.”

“ Give the word to mount,” cried Perez, who had stood silent through the scene, but now spoke loudly and scornfully. “ What answer shall I bear to Lord

Thomas, Sir John Talbot? Shall I say that you refuse to join?"

" You shall bear no base account of me to-day!" cried the unhappy gentleman, and without trusting himself with another look at the wretched ones he left behind, he hurried to the court-yard, where a horse stood ready saddled for his use.

Talbot mounted in silence, and as the troop wheeled out of the court-yard and turned up to the Dame's-gate, struck his horse fiercely with the spur, and dashed out in front; he could not bear the eyes of those around him, for his own were swimming in grief and indignation. When he reached Castle-street, he was so far in advance of his company, that he found himself obliged to pull up till he should learn which way they intended to take. He looked up and down the busy thoroughfare before him, all alive with the bustle of secure prosperity; stalls, shops, and warehouses far as the eye could reach, teeming with a peaceful and industrious race, toiling on in happy ignorance of the impending calamities which he was even then lending his aid to hasten. For a moment his heart failed him; but as he looked up at the fortress, and saw on the brow of the barbican, the sharp outline of the spikes on which the heads of the Leinster rebels were bleaching in the blue sky, he thought, with a shudder and a thrill of anguish, of his own friend's kindly features clotted with blood from the block, and exposed to the insults of his enemies, over the gates of London. Thoughts of his allegiance revived by his contemplation of the peaceful security around him were swept away in the thirst for vengeance which now seized his whole soul.

By this time Parez was again by his side, and the troop wheeled down to the right, passed the castle at a trot, and drew up in line opposite the gate into Thomas-street.

The citizens crowded round, admiring their gay accoutrements and martial order, for as yet there was no suspicion of rebellion in their minds, and the men themselves, in general were ignorant of the purpose for which they were assembled. Presently the crowd collected round the gates began to break up and line the causeways at either side, and a gallant cavalcade was seen through the open arch, advancing from Thomas-court towards the drawbridge. "Way for the Lord Deputy," cried two truncheon bearers, dashing through the gate, and a shout rose on all sides, that Lord Thomas was coming. Trumpeters and pursuivants at arms rode first; then came the mace-bearer with his symbol of office, and, after him, the sword of state in a rich scabbard of velvet, carried by its proper officer. Lord Thomas himself, in his robes of state, and surrounded by a dazzling array of nobles and gentlemen, spurred after: the arched gateway was choked for a moment with tossing plumes and banners, flashing arms and gleaming faces, as the magnificent troop burst in like a flood of fire upon the dark and narrow precincts of the city. But, behind the splendid cortege which headed their march, came a dense column of mailed men-at-arms, that continued to defile through the close pass, long after the gay mantles and waving pennons of their leaders were indistinct in the distance.

Talbot, still high in passion, as the pomp drew near his position, kept his eyes fixed on the face of the young Geraldine. Lord Thomas's brow was flushed, and he glanced fiercely from the castle to the river, as he listened to the urgent representations of an elderly knight by his side. But when his eye fell on Talbot, where he sat reining back his charger to give room for the cavalcade, a haggard smile crossed his agitated features, and he called him by his name and extended his hand to welcome him.

"Talbot!" he cried; "by heaven, I thank thee! I knew thou wouldest not fail me in trouble; for he who is gone never failed thee in time of need—may my race be forgotten and my name be a watchword of reproach, if I make not the day of his death the blackest in the English calendar!—ha, Sir John, knowest thou that I mean to hold the island against Henry?"

"My lord," replied Talbot, "I have not yet heard your lordship's design; but be it what it may, I will back the quarrel of your father's son as long as I can hold my sword."

"My own design and my desire," said Lord Thomas, "is, to fling a bold defiance in the teeth of the council, rendering up office and allegiance together, and opening the war as becomes an associate of the royal princes whom I look to have for my allies."

"My lord, this is madness," cried the old knight at his side; "ride up to Birmingham tower with that sword and mace before you, and the king's chief castle is won without a blow; renounce your allegiance before the council, and White will have his drawbridge raised and his cannon pointed before we can so much as make good our passage back from Mary's-abby."

"Sir Oliver," replied the young lord, "thou art my uncle, and God forbid I should make light of thy advice; but it shall never be said of Thomas Fitzgerald, that he struck his first blow against Henry Tudor in the dark! What would they say at Rome, or at Madrid?"

"My lord," cried a gentleman who rode near him, "what we do here, is the question, not what they may say there. If we can by the use of Henry's authority, make head against his friends till succours from the Pope and Emperor arrive, trust me our allies will never ask whether we won the quarters where we lodge them, by strength of hand, or virtue of the king's writ."

"Sir Richard Walsh," exclaimed Lord Thomas, "but that I know none here would cheaply see my father's son dishonoured, I would say that some among you were bent on turning this brave adventure to a rascal conspiracy!"

"You do us wrong, my lord," cried Sir Oliver Fitzgerald, colouring deeply; "but I urge you no farther; conduct the war as you will. Yet although I withdraw my unpalatable advice, I will not hold back my hand; for, I would rather strike ten blows in your quarrel, than waste another word on your headstrong folly."

"Pardon me, my dear kinsman," cried the young noble, earnestly grasping his uncle's hand; "and you, Sir Richard, and those other knights and gentlemen who have advised me otherwise, forgive me for what I have said; but, trust me, this is the nobler, this is the worthier course. Nor do I think I stand alone in preferring the honourable chances of open warfare, to the petty successes of surprise or treachery, Sir John Talbot, am I not in the right?"

"I for one," cried Talbot, "would think our cause dishonoured in the eyes of all brave men, if your lordship turned the sword, which you have sworn to use for the benefit of the king's government, against those who committed it, on the faith of that oath, into your lordship's hands."

"Pooh!" cried Burnet of Bellgriffin, "who talks of a breach of faith, and he already forsworn in his oath of allegiance?"

"He stuck upon no point of honour when he put the Earl to death, after bringing him to London on a solemn pledge of safety!" exclaimed Sir Dominick Le Poer.

"Treachery for treachery!" cried Perez: "it is but equal justice."

"My lord!" exclaimed Talbot, drawing up, and Lord

Thomas checked his horse at the same moment, so that the whole party were brought to a sudden halt—"I said I would back the quarrel of your father's son : I am ready to make good what I have said at peril of my body, but I tell those knights and gentlemen, that I would rather my hand were rotted off than that it should ever draw blade in the cause either of plotting conspirators or of priestly bigots!"

"What!" cried Le Poer, scornfully, "this is somewhat early for desertion ; if any man here be afraid to join in our revolt, he is at liberty to withdraw himself at once, there is no need of splitting straws for an apology."

"Sir Dominick Le Poer," said Talbot, "if you mean me, I will tell you plainly, the chief fear I have in this adventure is, being joined in it by one whom I once saw turn his back upon his friends, when blows were plentier than good advice, in the gap of Garrycaltrim."

"The cause never yet prospered that was begun by blaspheming the ministers and church of God," exclaimed the angry ecclesiastic, before Le Poer could reply to this biting retort.

"I tell thee, priest," cried Sir Oliver Fitzgerald, "I like thy doctrine as little as he—thou and Master Perez are bad advocates among cavaliers of honour ; I am, in truth, already half of the opinion of my noble kinsman and his valiant friend. Heaven forbid that either falsehood or treachery should ever be charged on Oliver Fitzgerald, though thou and thy whole church were to be saved from perdition by their means!—nephew, I counsel the use of thy authority only so far as thy conscience can clearly carry thee ; if it goes a hair's breadth against thy honour as a knight and gentleman to take advantage of the castle for thy proclamation of revolt, lead on to Mary's-abby, and we will bid these proud lords defiance in the name of God!"

"And so say I," cried Sir John De la Hyde. "And I"—"and I"—"and I," re-echoed from a dozen gentlemen around, whom indecision, or dislike of disagreement had hitherto kept silent.

"Come on then friends and kinsmen;" cried Lord Thomas, turning his horse's head towards the river; "we will never leave it to our enemies to say that we have played any but a fair and manly part by them." The dissentient party yielded reluctantly, and the whole cavalcade wheeled down to the Liffey. Sir Oliver, as they crossed the bridge, cast a wistful eye over the battlemented range wall on the towers of the castle, frowning in massive security behind them; but the time was past; for, even as he gazed, he saw the long levers of the drawbridge rise high against the sky above the curtain of the barbican.

"White has caught the alarm, so good-bye to Dublin Castle!" cried Burnel,

"Ay," answered Le Poer, bitterly, "will a point of honour, think you, weigh down yonder drawbridge or a sharp gibe cut open that portcullis? Yet we told them how this would be,"

"It is a judgment and a sign"—began Travers, the churchman; but Sir Oliver cut him short. "Spur on to the Abbey, gentlemen, or the tidings will have reached the council before us."

The gates of Mary's-abbey soon received the leaders of the revolt, and ere the last of their followers had ceased to pour into the echoing court-yard, Lord Thomas and his friends were at the door of the council-chamber. The assembled lords rose at his entrance, and way was made for him to the chair of state.

"Keep your seats, my lords," said he, stopping midway between the entrance and the council table, while his

friends gathered in a body at his back. "I have not come to preside over this council, my lords. I come to tell you of a bloody tragedy that has been enacted in London, and to give you to know what steps I have thought fit to take in consequence."

"What tragedy, my lord?" said Alan, the Archbischop of Dublin; "your Lordship's looks and words alarm me: what means this multitude of men now in the house of God? This looks like something, my lord, that I would be loth to name in the presence of loyal men."

"My Lord Archbishop," replied Thomas, "when you pretend an ignorance of my noble father's murder—"

"Murder!" cried the Lord Chancellor Cromer, starting from his seat, and all at the council table uttered exclamations of astonishment or horror, save only Alan and the Lord High Treasurer—"yes, my lord," the young Geraldine continued, with a stern voice, still addressing the Archbischop, "when you pretend ignorance of that foul and cruel murder, which was done by the instigation and traitorous procuring of yourself and others your accomplices, and yet taunt me with the step which I have taken in consequence; rashly, it may be, but not, I trust, unworthy of my noble father's son; you betray at once your treachery and your hypocrisy." By this time the tumult among the soldiery without, who had not till now heard of the death of the Earl, was as if a thousand men had been storming the Abbey. They were all native Irish, and to a man devoted to Kildare. Curses, lamentations, and cries of rage and vengeance sounded from every quarter of the court-yard; and some who entered the council-hall, with drawn swords, to be avenged on the authors of their calamity, were with difficulty restrained, by the knights and gentlemen around the door, from rushing on the Archbischop and slaying him on the spot,

as they heard him denounced by their chief. When the clamour was somewhat abated, Alan, who had stood up to speak at its commencement addressed the Chancellor.

"My lord, this unhappy young man says he knows not what. If his noble father, which God forbid, should have come under his Majesty's displeasure; if he should, indeed, have suffered—although I know not that he hath—the penalty of his numerous treasons—"

"Bald priest, thou liest!" cried Sir Oliver Fitzgerald; "my murdered brother was a truer servant of the crown than ever stood in thy satin shoes!"

Alan, and the Lord Chancellor Cromer, also an Archbishop, and Primate of Armagh, rose together; the one complaining loudly of the wrong done to his Order; the other beseeching that all present would remember they were Christians and subjects of the Crown of England; but in the midst of this confusion, Lord Thomas, taking the sword of state out of the hands of its bearer, advanced up the hall to the council table, with a lofty determination in his bearing, that at once arrested all eyes. It was plain he was about to announce his final purpose, and all within the hall awaited what he would say, in sullen silence. His friends and followers now formed a dense semicircle at the foot of the hall; the lords of the council had involuntarily drawn round the throne and Chancellor's chair; Thomas stood alone on the floor opposite the table, with the sword in his hands. Anxiety and pity were marked on the venerable features of Cromer as he bent forward to hear what he would say; but Alan, and the treasurer, Lord James Butler, exchanged looks of malignant satisfaction.

"My lord," said Thomas, "I come to tell you that my father has been basely put to death, for, I know not what, alleged treason; and that we have taken up arms

to avenge his murder. Yet, although we be thus driven by the tyranny and cruelty of the King into open hostility, we would not have it said hereafter that we have conspired like villains and churls, but boldly declared our purpose, as becomes warriors and gentlemen. This sword of state, my lords, is yours; not mine. I received it with an oath, that I would use it for your benefit; I should stain my honour if I turned it to your hurt. My lords, I have now need of my own weapon, which I can trust; but, as for the common sword, it has flattered me not; a painted scabbard, while its edge was already red in the best blood of my house; aye, and is even now whetted anew for further destruction of the Geraldines. Therefore, my lords, save yourselves from us as from open enemies. I am no longer Henry Tudor's Deputy—I am his foe. I have more mind to conquer than to govern—to meet him in the field than to serve him in office. And now, my lords, if all the hearts in England and Ireland, that have cause thereto, do but join in this quarrel, as I look that they will, then shall the world shortly be made sensible of the tyranny, cruelty, falsehood, and heresy, for which the age to come may well count this base King, among the ancient traitors of most abominable and hateful memory.

“*Croom aboo!*” cried Neale Roe O’Kennedy, Lord Thomas’s bard, who had pressed into the body of the hall, at the head of the Irish soldiery. He was conspicuous over all by his height, and the splendour of his native costume. His legs and arms were bare: the sleeves of his yellow *cothone*, parting above the elbow, fell in voluminous folds almost to the ground, while its skirts, girded at the loins, covered him to the knee. Over this he wore a short jacket of crimson, the sleeves just covering the shoulder, richly wrought and embroidered, and

drawn round the waist by a broad belt, set with precious stones, and fastened with a massive golden buckle. His laced and fringed mantle was thrown back, but kept from falling by a silver brooch, as broad as a man's palm, which glittered on his breast. He stretched out his hand, the gold bracelets rattling as they slid back on the thickness of his red-haired arm, and exclaimed in Irish—“Who is the young lion of the plains of Liffey, that affrights the men of counsel, and the ruler of the Saxon with his noble voice? Who is the raked-up ember of Kildare, that would consume the enemies of his people, and the false churls of the cruel race of clan-London? It is the son of Gerald—the top branch of the oak of Ofaly—it is Thomas of the silken mantle, *Tomás-an-teeda, Ard-Righ Eireann!*”

“*Righ Tomás go bragh!*” shouted the soldiery, and many of the young lord's Anglo-Irish friends responded, “Long live King Thomas!” but the Chancellor, Archbishop Cromer, who had listened to his insane avowal in undisguised distress, and who had already been seen to wring his hands, and even to shed tears as the misguided nobleman and his friends thus madly invoked their own destruction, came down from his seat, and earnestly grasped the young lord by the hand, while he thus addressed him—

“Good, my lord,” he cried—while his venerable figure and known attachment to the house of Kildare, attested as it was by such visible evidences of concern, commanded for a time the attention of all present—“Good, my lord, suffer me to use the privilege of an old man's speech with you, before you finally give up this ensign of your authority, and pledge of your allegiance. I have known the friendship of your noble father, and I am bold to say there is no man in this presence, saving your-

self, my Lord Thomas—for loth indeed would I be to have to call you so soon my lord of Kildare—who would more deeply deplore any injury that might befall him. But this report of his death, whereon your lordship would ground your anger, what is it at best but an obscure rumour? My lord, I cannot credit it. We of the council have had no tidings of such severity either designed for the Earl of Kildare or practised against him. Yet, if it be the case that God has permitted the heart of the King to be turned against his servant, and that you, my lord, are thus suddenly called upon to support the name and honour of your noble family, trust me, you ought now rather to be considering how best you could discharge the grave duties of the head of such a House, and how best restore it to the dignity of its half-forfeited loyalty, than thus to run to hopeless arms in the desperate certainty of utterly destroying all that you have left worth the retrieving——”

“*Crop an dioul!* What says the Saxon Ollamh?” said one of the galloglass to his neighbour.

“By the axe in my hand, Phelim Gorm,” replied the other, “It seems to me that he is making a rann in praise of the old Earl—God’s heavy curse on them that brought him low!”

“What!” cried Phelim Gorm, “have the Saxons got fleas among them, as well as doctors and brehons?”

“If he be not a bard,” replied the galloglass, “he is a rhymer, and is crying the keen—see if the tears be not running down his cheeks! *A yeah yeelish! mo vrone, mo villeah, agus mo leun ghuirt!*”

“Oh, my lord,” the voice of Cromer was now heard exclaiming, “the name of a King is sacred, but odious is the name of rebellion: the one derived from heaven, and by God defended, the other forged in hell, and

executed by Satan. My lord, this is no private broil, in which you might, with little hurt, give way for a time to your passion: this is a quarrel that concerns the crown, that touches the nobility, that appertains to the whole commonwealth, and therefore it behoves you well before you jeopardize so many and so weighty interests, first, to see that the cause of your quarrel is certain, and then ask whether the advantage to be gained be not out-weighed by the calamity and wretchedness which this attempt, if persevered in, must produce."

"It is no keening, Con," said Phelim Gorm, "he is pronouncing some heroical oration in praise of the Tierna Oge—*farrah! Tomds-an-teeda's aboo!*!"

"That I cannot tell," replied Con; "but, be he bard or rhymer, he wears a glibb and coolun longer than the wildest of O'Connor's kerns."

"'Tis not rightly trained;" observed Phelim; and to my eye it does not seem like a man's natural hair; but, ababoo! what says he now?"

"My lord," continued Cromer, "while the gale blows full in your sails, doubt not that divers will cleave to you, and feed upon you as crows upon their carrion; but when the storm begins to bluster, then will these same summer friends leave you like a goodly bark stranded at the ebb, or driven by the tempests ashore. Then will come impeachment and conviction and attainder—your arms reversed, your manors confiscated, your castles razed, your name dishonoured! Weigh, then, my lord, the nobility of your ancestors; remember your late father's exhortation, forget not your duty to your prince, but above all, have pity on the wretched state of your poor country. Think with what heaps of curses you will be loaded, when the barbarous soldier, let loose in those wars, shall plunder the poor subject, consuming the

widow's portion and inheritance of the fatherless, wasting the country, length and breadth ; ay, and so endamaging the whole realm, that they are not yet born who shall last smart for it. My lord, the King is a vessel of grace and mercy, and your offence is not yet over-heinous : cleave to his clemency—it is not yet too late. Oh, my lord, I pray you in most humble wise, for the love of God, for the duty you bear your prince, for the regard you bear your country, and the respect you would have for your own safety, abandon this headlong folly, and return to your allegiance ! ”

“ My Lord Chancellor,” replied Thomas, “ I came not here to take advice, but to give you to understand what I purpose to do. As loyalty would have me know my prince, so duty compels me to reverence my father. I thank you heartily for your counsel ; but it is now too late. As to my fortune, I will take it as God sends it, and rather choose to die with valour and liberty, than live under King Henry in bondage and villainy. Wherefore, my lord, I thank you again for the concern you take in my welfare, and, since you will not receive this sword out of my hands, I can but cast it from me, even as I here cast off and renounce all duty and allegiance to your master.” So saying, he flung the sword of state upon the council table. The blade started a hand's breadth out of the sheath, from the violence with which it was dashed out of his hands. He then, in the midst of a tumult of acclamations from his followers, and cries of horror and pity from the lords and prelates around, tore off his robes of office, and cast them at his feet. Stripped thus of his ensigns of dignity, Lord Thomas Fitzgerald stood up, amid the wreck of his fair fortunes, an armed and avowed rebel, equipped in complete mail, before the representatives of England and Ireland.

The cheering from his adherents was loud and enthusiastic, and those without replied with cries of fierce exultation.

“*Farrah, farrah!*” shouted Neale Roe O’Kennedy, in a voice of thunder; “it is Thomas of the shirt of iron that has leaped forth from his silken livery, like the bright steel from its sheath of velvet! like the brand from its cloak of ashes! like the red flaming and consuming fire of heaven out of the scattered clouds of the sky! —The sword of Erin is sharp, heavy and piercing; the ember of the raked-up wrath of Erin is red, smoking, and terrible; the flash of the avenging thunderbolts of Erin is swift and sure, strong and sudden, burning and blasting, and wasting and inevitable!—Ring around him, sons of Gerralt! shout for the *Mac an Earla Mor!* Throw by your hunting spears, children of the chase; we must soon follow our game with battle-axe and claymore to the wild dog’s den; cast away your bows of chase, ye hunters of the plains of Leinster, we must hunt a prey to-day with the shot of guns and cannons in the nest of dragons and in the lair of the dun Saxon lion! *Farrah, farrah! Croom aboo!*”—and crying the Geraldine war cry, he rushed into the courtyard, his red locks flaming over the heads of the clansmen like a torch.

By this time the lords of the council were dispersed by the doors at the throne end of the hall, for Lord Thomas with the same chivalrous generosity that induced him openly to withdraw his allegiance, had permitted them to escape unmolested as from a solemn parley. His friends now gathered round him to consult on their proceedings.

“My lord, if we get not the first word with his Holiness and the Emperor,” said Sir Oliver Fitzgerald to his nephew, “that pestilent fellow, Alan, will have the

start of us, and mar our hopes of succour from the continent."

"Right, uncle," said Thomas, "it shall be looked to; but first let us summon White to render up the castle."

"Your lordship will hardly handle the keys of Dublin castle now without blows," said Le Poer."

"Well, then, if we must take them by strong hand, let us fall to without delay," cried Thomas.

"The citizens are ill-affected towards us," observed Sir Richard Walsh; "I question much whether they will suffer us to place our batteries within the walls; and from Sheep-street and the south across the city ditch, we would assault the place to a manifest disadvantage."

"Ha!" cried Sir Oliver, "it is true; the porking churls do hate us heartily; yet if we do not get their good will, by fair means or by foul, White may baffle us for a good six weeks yet."

"I'll tell you what, my lord," said Burnel, "although I advised against this course, I will do what a true man may to aid you out of it. From my poor house of Ballgriffen, I hold, as it were, the keys of Fingal, the granary of Dublin. Now, my lord, send a flag to the citizens, and give them to understand that if they refuse your lordship's artillery a friendly reception, I will close the doors of their market-house, while a bushel of corn remains in Meath."

"It is well said," cried Lord Thomas. "Let us send to the knaves as Master Burnel advises. Parez, wilt thou and Sir John Talbot do me this service?"

"Willingly, my lord," said Parez; and Talbot, conscious of his having been the chief adviser of a course that was already beginning to be beset by difficulties, also consented. His dislike of Parez was, if possible, increased since he had heard his dishonourable sentiments

in the dispute about giving up the sword, and his passions ruffled as they had been, by successive excitements, were with difficulty kept under. As they received their instructions, he could plainly perceive that all those who had been opposed to him in that dispute, regarded him with evident distrust; while many of the rest, beginning to feel the difficulty into which their rashness had hurried them, hung back, or muttered their acknowledgments of late repentance.

Again, riding side by side, with dark brows and averted glances, the rivals silently and sullenly proceeded on their mission. The gates at the farther end of the bridge were closed, and a gun was run out from the embrasure above as they advanced.

"Give the word, or I shoot!" cried a bulky citizen showing his linstock above the breech of the falcon.

"Base churl, who trusted thee with a gun, that know not a flag of truce from a royal standard?" cried Talbot; "Open thy gates, sirrah porker! we come with terms for your burghers."

"Churl! porker!" exclaimed the angry citizen, vainly striving to bring the piece to bear upon Talbot's men, who were now close under the walls. "Traitor and rebel! I'll teach thee to revile the city authorities! Heave her up, my masters—I'll blow the bankrupt coxcomb into the Liffey!"

"Stop thy hand, good Master Harvey," cried Talbot with a smile; "the recoil of the piece will burst thy girdle: on my honour, master draper, I knew you not; else I had not used those unworthy terms; but I have been chafed to-day, and need thy forgiveness,"

"Ah, Sir John, Sir John, what desperate course is this thou hast taken to," cried the appeased trader; "where shall I now look for payment of the last suit of velvet, thou attainted spendthrift?"

"This, at least, is not yet confiscated," cried Talbot, flinging him his purse. "There is my debt, and a broad piece beside for top knots to thy wenches; but, Master Harvey, open the gates, and give us speech of your burghers without more delay."

"What hast thou to say to the loyal citizens of Dublin?" demanded a voice which made Talbot start in his saddle, as Paul Dudley showed himself over the battlement above the gateway, with others of the aldermen and burghers.

"Do you refuse our flag any more convenient conference than this, Master Dudley?" said Perez, for Talbot had turned his head away, and could make no answer.

"If you like not this," replied the loyal merchant, "you shall have a louder from our cannon mouths:—what seek ye?"

"Passage to the castle, to summon the constable to surrender, and free quarters to besiege him if he refuse."

"Tell your traitorous master that he shall have no passage through the streets of Dublin, but over the bodies of its slaughtered citizens," was the reply.

"Then hear what I am commanded by my master to tell you," said Perez, and he repeated the threat, as it had been made by Burnel, of stopping the supplies from Fingal and Meath. There was a moment's evident consternation among the citizens, that spoke of slenderly victualled stores; but Paul Dudley stood forward and said, "You have your answer. You get no footing here though we should eat our belts! Come, brother citizens, be of good cheer; I have in my warehouse some twenty hogsheads of powdered beef, at the service of the city, if need be."

"And I," cried another alderman, "so far as a hundred pounds worth of pork and flour can go in our supply, will freely open my stores to the wants of our garrison."

"Want nothing for wine, while the ten tuns in my cellars at Preston's Inns can feel the spiggot," cried a third; but Talbot, who had listened with mingled feelings of remorse and admiration, advanced again to the gate as his party were retiring.

"For the love of Christ," he cried, "hear me one word before we go! As I hope for mercy, Master Dudley, I had rather lose my right hand than see the people of this fair city suffering as they must suffer, notwithstanding all your private means, if this resolution of yours be persisted in. My worshipful masters, you who have wives and little ones at home, think, I beseech you, what it is to see those we love perishing of famine——"

"I have a daughter at home," said Dudley, "and I would rather see her dead for hunger, than let a rebel plant one gun within our walls!"

Talbot shuddered, and for a moment shrunk back, but he was not yet repulsed. "Citizens of Dublin, heed not what he says," he exclaimed: "it is anger against me that has made him mad. You will starve before three weeks, if you listen not to our terms. Oh! Master Dudley, do not think that I came on this errand with my own will. Before my God I tell you, that my heart is wrung with anguish when I think of the hard fate that brings me here! Relent in time—'tis you alone who lead the rest in this. Oh! Master Dudley, relent, I pray you, by the love you bear the one you love best."

"Traitor, name her not," cried Dudley, "or not even your flag shall protect you!—go with your new associates; go!"

"There was a time, Master Dudley——"

"That time is past—hence, traitor!"

"Heaven send you better counsel, I pray from the bottom of my heart," cried Talbot to the burghers; and

after another appealing look to Dudley, met by a rigid frown that forbade all hope of reconciliation, he turned, silently, from the gate, and rode back to Mary's Abbey, with his party.

"Well, Sir John, what says those scum of the city?" were Lord Thomas's first words, as he entered the hall where the rebel leaders were still in consultation.

"My lord, it grieves me to say, they obstinately refuse us admittance,"

"Then may White sleep sound to-night," cried Le Poer, "for no flag of ours will wave on Dublin Castle this bout."

"What, Sir John," cried Lord Thomas, "did you urge the cutting off of their supplies?"

"We did my lord," replied Perez, "but they aver they are well victualled. I would we had taken the other course!—but, no matter—'tis useless to repine when the time has gone by."

"By my honour, Sir John Talbot, it was bad counsel you gave," said Sir Richard Walsh.

"Truly, I begin to see again that it was so," exclaimed Sir Oliver; "but 'tis too late to grieve for what cannot now be helped."

"Judgments are prepared for scorers, and stripes for the backs of fools," muttered Father Travers.

"Gentlemen," cried Lord Thomas, "at my door lie the blame, if blame has been derserved. Leave off, now, idle regrets, and let us proceed with the disposition of our forces."

In the arrangements that followed, Talbot found to his cost the effects of the distrust with which the leaders now regarded him. While the main body of Lord Thomas's forces returned to Kilmainham, or went to garrison the Earl's numerous castles in Kildare and Ofaly, he was assigned a petty post at Artane, a poor village beyond

Clontarf, with orders to intercept provisions or succours coming to the city by way of Howth or the Skerries. Hardly concealing his indignation, he put himself at the head of his little party, and departed for his obscure post, where he took up his position among the wretched cabins before nightfall. He could not go to rest; he traversed the clay floor of his hut with hurried and irregular steps, or flung himself, hopeless of sleep, from the coarse couch to the coarser bench. At length, wrapping his cloak around him, he rushed out, and strove to allay the bitterness of his reflections by walking in the open air. The night was dark and stormy, and the gale, sweeping in from the bay, sounded along the leafy flats of Clontarf with the roar of an aerial sea. He breathed more freely as he heard the tossed branches struggling with the blast overhead. "Blow on," he muttered—"strip them while they are green; I was blighted before leafing time. Dogs and traitors! this is a fair return they make me for preserving them from eternal infamy! Oh, weak, weak, Lord Thomas; weak nephew, and weaker uncle!—and Travers, the hypocrite, and Le Poer, the dastard, and Perez, the sneering villain—Oh! why was I born to bring shame on an honest man's grey hairs, and sorrow on an angel's heart, for the sake of such associates? Forgive me, noble Gerald! forgive me, that I had forgotten thee and thy cruel wrongs! Oh, if the departed spirit can hear the complaint of wretches upon earth, look down upon the child of your bounty, driven out from happiness and home for your sake, and forgive him if he has forgotten your wrongs in his own misfortunes."

With such thoughts shaping themselves into bitter exclamations, he roamed on through a groaning alley of elms and beeches, their swinging tops hardly distinguishable from the sky. Ere long he found himself in an open

knoll, from which, through their darkness, the lights of Dublin were visible beyond the Liffey. Softer emotions swelled upon his bosom as he stood to gaze and speculate whether any of these could be the taper in Ellen Dudley's chamber. He thought of her last look as he had left her with her infirm parent in her arms that morning: he pictured her now sitting weeping and disconsolate, the bridal favours he had bound in her hair lying withered at her feet; or by the side of her angry father, listening, with timid dutifulness, to his severe commands. "I will go to her, let loyalists and rebels do their worst!" he exclaimed, and rushed down the eminence towards Dublin. Careless of his path, he pushed on through thicket and ploughed land, fording the Tolka at Drumcondra, and holding his course right for the light on Newman's Tower. On the Liffey bank opposite was a solitary cabin. Talbot knocked loudly at the door: "Ho, Connor Bawn!" he cried; "Connor Bawn Kelly, rise and ferry me to Finn's Castle stairs. It is I, Sir John Talbot."

"*Ababoo!*!" cried the ferryman; "is your nobleness in trouble, that you seek a ferry at this hour of the night?"

"I am Connor; I am in arms with *Tomás-an-Teeda*, and in need of help."

"*Yeah yeelish!* and the old Earl has had foul play among the Saxons. May God lay his heavy hand on them that did it! Ay, surely I will row your nobleness across, if the night were blacker than their hearts that could do hurt to the kind MacGerralt!"

Connor came forth with his oars, and they pushed his shallop down to the stormy water's edge. It was so black above, that they could hardly see the walls as they pulled through showers of spray across the river. In the darkness, and among the noises of the winds and waters, they

crossed unchallenged. Connor moored his boat silently in shelter of the little pier from which the stairs descended; and Talbot stole along the base of the rampart, till he came to where Paul Dudley's house abutted on the river bank. He climbed the wall of the courtyard by the gates, thence clambered to a buttress of the garden wall, which was overgrown with ivy, surmounted it, and, dropping down upon a flower pot inside, found himself under Ellen Dudley's window.

"Ellen! Ellen Dudley," he whispered, tapping upon the glass; "come to me for God's sake! I have dared everything to see you."

"Mother of Mercy!" he joyfully heard her exclaim, "I hear his voice even now!"

"You do, dearest; come to the window. I am safe now, and you need fear nothing."

When the first fond words of welcome and tenderness were over, Ellen said—"Sir John, why did you come to the gates this morning in company with Perez? My father took it as an avowal of your having abandoned all desire of reconciliation; he is mortified beyond measure; for, indeed, he still hoped to have reclaimed you, and all might yet have been well had you not made your participation in this revolt too prominent: but his anger against you now is as great as the love he bore you formerly. Heaven grant you may not be found here while it lasts!"

"Ellen, I would rather have faced ten men-at-arms than have met your father as I did upon the bridge to-day; but I could not refuse to obey the command which committed that galling service to me and him you named: yet if I thought Paul Dudley was to have been the man we were to treat with, I would—on my honour I would—have remonstrated with Lord Thomas, though I have

to-day got both blame and ill-will for one expostulation too much already."

"But, oh, Sir John, where do you come from now; or what is to become of you and this wild broil?"

"'Tis scarce more than an hour since I left my post in the woods of Artane, where I have been stationed to guard the northern passes to the city. I have been slighted, Ellen," he continued bitterly, "by those about Lord Thomas: I am housed in a hut, and sent to deal with the cattle drovers and clowns who would bring their commodities to your market, while Parez is appointed to command the Earl's chief castle of Maynooth, and force the nobles of the western pale to submission."

"It is ungrateful and ungenerous in Lord Thomas to sanction such an insult. You were well worthy the highest command he had to bestow," cried Ellen, at once partaking in her lover's indignation. "But, alas!" she added with a sigh, "I should be better contented that you will thus have a less share in the misery your revolt will bring upon so many innocent beings: for—and I do not know whether I should tell you this: but trusting to your honour, I will confide it to you—boldly as our citizens spoke of their resources to-day, when pride and emulous loyalty sustained their hearts, and lent confidence to their looks, I heard my father, when he came home, confess, and that with tears in his eyes, that if the passes from Fingal and Meath be closed, we shall have famine among us before a fortnight."

"Good Heaven!" cried Talbot, "had I known this, I had not so easily been dismissed this morning: but you, at least, shall want for nothing, while I have hands to bring it to you. The ferryman is at my disposition: neither you nor one of your father's house shall want, come what may."

"It is not for ourselves I feel," said Ellen; "but thinking of the poor people who are unprovided for, and must suffer first and longest, makes me sick at heart."

"Oh, trust me, Ellen, it will never come to that; they will open their gates before they are brought to such a pass."

"Alas, Sir John," she replied, "you little know the firmness of their leaders; they have sworn to hold out while there is food for a man within the walls."

"Ellen," said Talbot earnestly, "you must come with me. Poor as my cabin is, it will still be a safer home for you than here: wretched as my fortunes are, better even such, than to sicken here over scenes that will but blight your youth's promise, and haunt your memory with miserable recollections through all your after life. I did not come to-night to ask you to fly with me; nothing but this could make me offer to share such poverty as mine with her I love best: but Ellen, that shame is gone, and I will not blush to bear you to whatever refuge I can offer from the horrors that await you here."

Her voice had a tone of stronger feeling as she replied—"Sir John, you could not love me as you say you do, if you believed I would do this."

His heart smote him at once—"Oh, Ellen, forgive me! You are, indeed, his only stay: to leave him in this time of danger and affliction is what I could not have asked you to do; but, believe me, I had forgotten even his existence in the tumult of my thoughts. Such a day and night are enough to make a man forget all but his own miseries."

"No; in this peril and distress," said Ellen, "I cannot leave my father."

"But, Ellen dearest; if—and yet God in mercy forbid!—but if your father should be taken away—oh, believe

me, I would not give you this pain, Ellen, if any suffering of mine could avail to save you—but, my own love, and my heart's betrothed, will you not fly with me if left alone in such a scene of suffering and danger?"

"When I plighted you my troth, Sir John," she replied, but she was weeping while she spoke, "I never meant that peril or misfortune should prevent my being true to what I said. I cannot, and you will not ask that I should, leave my father now: but when his danger is over—forgive me, Sir John—and think it not, I beseech you, unmaidenly in me to confess this—when my father's danger is over I shall be true to my plighted troth to you, whatever may befall."

"Ellen dearest, I repine not at all I have suffered, when I hear you thus secure the only hope that was worth my preserving. You shall see me often; and Heaven speed an end to this siege, till I can claim the fulfilment of the dear words that you have blessed me with. But hark! I hear footsteps in the street: ha! they knock; and there is a stir towards the river. Adieu, sweet Ellen; may good angels watch over you and all you love till I come back. I must away. Oh, farewell!" and he hastened to make his escape. He descended the buttress and court wall in safety, until within a few feet of the ground, when, his foot slipping on a bar of the gates, he fell heavily among some loose planks lying below.

"Who goes?" cried a sentry upon the wall next Newman's Tower, and a dog in the courtyard began to bark furiously.

"Treason, ho!" shouted some one from the house windows. Ere the words were out, the report of the sentry's matchlock roused the whole quarter of the walls. Talbot, stumbling over the broken ground between the rampart and the soft bank of the river, ran for Finn's

Castle stairs at the top of his speed, for he plainly heard Paul Dudley's gates thrown open behind him, and the voices and footsteps of men in pursuit. Another flash from the walls showed him Connor Kelly in the stern of his boat, sheltering himself behind the little pier, and hastily throwing off the tackle by which he was moored.

"Treason! treason!" resounded from the walls overhead—"there's a spy's boat at the stairs; fire into her with the demi-culver!—lights and linstocks, ho!"

"Leap light, *a-cushla*," cried the boatman, in a low voice, as Talbot sprang on board the swinging skiff; "leap light, or you will go through and through her. Ah! *chorp an Chriost*, the plank's started! *Dar Kiaran*, she's clean gone; but keep up your heart, *duine deelish*—if we pull free, we'll get across before she fills."

"Hush, Connor; I trust there's no harm done; it was my fault I know; but pull," cried Talbot, dropping his cloak, and stretching himself to the oar.

"Keep her head to the swell, Sir Shawn," cried Connor; "the seam gapes a finger's breadth at every stroke."

"They are pointing the culver, Connor; bear up out of the range of the shot."

"Pull for your life, Sir Shawn! The *Buachal ghasta* has a worse wound in her keel than either culver or falcon will put in her to-night."

"Give fire!" cried a voice from the battlements, and the shot drove up the water in a white jet over the seas, a dozen yards a-head; but the flash showed the centre of the Liffey running in a line of sharp breakers, close under their bow,

"I mind their shot no more than a *buachaleen*'s snow-ball," said Connor; "but this swell, this swell; it is shaking the broken creature to pieces. Lay yourself to the oar, *a vic deelish*! never mind their matchlocks; pull, pull,

for the love of God ! the cot is filling—she is filling fast,” and Talbot, who now felt the water above his ankles as he sat, perceived that she no longer rose to the waves, but rolled heavily in the hollow of every sea.

“ Throw off your brogues, Connor Bawn,” he cried, “ we must swim for it.”

“ Pull, *Shawn Uaisle*, pull !” still cried the boatman ; “ ten strokes more, and I am safe ; ten strokes more for the love of God, and I am in my depth !”—Talbot did not say a word, but with a full heart, he strained at the tough ash, till his sinews cracked ; it was all in vain, the boat settled down heavier and heavier ; the oar broke in his hands, and as he fell back, the swamped shallop sank, and left nothing but the angry waters about him and her illfated owner. He seized Kelly by the shoulder :—“ Hold up, Connor ; keep a fast hold of the oar ; there’s a barge pulling for us from Dudley’s wharf. I see her between me and the sky ; hold up, Connor Bawn, and you are safe.”

“ Let me go,” gurgled the drowning man ; “ I have neither wife nor child—*Shawn Uaisle*, you must not be taken ! Let me go !—I’d rather drown than let them take you, *a vic deelish mo chree !* May the great God—a *yeah vore*, the water’s choking me !—bless—bless the work ! Let me sink, *Shawn deelish !*—I can die easy in the cause. *Tomás, Tomás-an-Teeda, Righ Tomás go bragh !—Croom, croom aboo !*”—and in spite of Talbot’s most desperate exertions, he was wrung out of his grasp, and rolled over and beaten down by the rushing waters, although within ten yards of the shallows, where if he could have set his foot, his life had been saved. The barge he had seen approaching, swept by within an oar’s length in the darkness.

“ The culver shot sunk them,” cried one.

"It did not strike within a spear's cast of them ; they swamped in the stream swell," said another.

"You are sure it was Kelly ?" asked a third.

The first speaker answered : "I saw him as plainly as I saw the gunner's face in the flash ; but who he was that was with him, I cannot tell."

"Pull back, my men," cried the questioner, "pull back to the traitor's house ; we will make a bonfire of it, that the rebels may read the proclamation of their treason by, from Chapelizod to Clontarf !"

Talbot, who had been striking out for the little quay, where Connor kept his boats, now yielded to the current of the river, and was carried past unseen, while the crew of the barge pushed across on their savage errand. He made for the beach, about a hundred yards lower down, where a ditch, running from the river side, afforded him a screen from observation. It was fortunate for him he did so, for ere he was well clear of the oozy exposed beach, the flames from the thatch of the devoted dwelling were casting gleams of pale light over the flat he had to traverse. Presently the fitful flashes broke into a red glare, that showed every object around as plainly as the sun at noon ; and the destroyers raised a shout that made his blood run cold, as shuddering he crept closer under his shelter. He blessed God that there were no shrieks of fatherless children ; no moans of a widowed mother to cry to Heaven from under the blazing rafters ; still when he thought of the generous sacrifice made for his sake, by him who had so long in honesty and peace inhabited these desolated walls, and who might now be rolling to the sea, an unanointed corpse, with all his sins and failings fresh upon his head, he could not restrain the anguish that rushed upon his soul, and the tears burst from his eyes. Dripping and spent, he lay panting in his concealment, till he saw

the incendiaries retire to their barge ; the river and the walls beyond started out into a moment's renewed splendour, as the falling roof sent up its last jet of red sparks and flame, but in another minute darkness closed down again on the smoking ruin, and Talbot might pursue his way without dread of observation. He reached Artane before morning, but it was not till after day-break that sleep closed his weary eyes, and gave him a temporary forgetfulness of all the strange events and conflicting emotions of that momentous day.

Week after week rolled on, and Talbot was not summoned from his monotonous solitude, to take part in any of the more active services of the revolt. He dared not seek another interview with Ellen ; and had he dared, he had no longer means of accomplishing it. The haunting misery of his thoughts was the reflection, that he was aiding in the infliction of want and suffering on those he loved ; this gnawed upon his soul continually, and, joined to the disgust and indignation which he felt at Lord Thomas's neglect, and the slights of the leaders, threw him into deep melancholy, and made his life utterly wretched. One afternoon, while sitting in his hut, and brooding in fierce impatience over his misfortunes, he was roused, for the first time since he had taken post in that lonely station, by a party of horse from Ballgriffen, with Burnel at their head.

" Ha, Sir John, how goes the game here in the woods ? " cried he ; " by my faith, we must not let you waste your time in this lonely inaction—mount, my good friend, there is work to be done this evening at Kilmainham."

" To horse, men ! " cried Talbot, buckling on his sword, but made no other answer.

" By Saint Doulough, Sir John, you speak wondrous short ; but no matter ; I come to ask the aid of your sword ;

SER. III.

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not to waste time in idle talk, but if you like not the service, you have but to say the word."

"Master Burnel, lead on: I need to be reminded of my duty."

They rode to Oxmantown-green in silence, and prepared to cross the Liffey. As they passed the ford, they heard sharp firing between the city and Kilmainham Castle. The shouts and din of fight were distinctly audible as they hurried up the opposite bank. The noise came from the little wood of Salcock, about a quarter of a mile across the country ahead.

"Spur on, gentlemen," cried Burnel, "it is the churls who have sallied to drive a prey, at blows with our friends from Kilmainham and Inchicore." They put spurs to their horses, and dashed across the plain to intercept the retreat of the citizens. It was a calm, sunny evening, and the landscape lay green and glittering before them; the birds were even twittering among the straggling trees, but the heart of the wood was convulsed with a struggle desperate and deadly; for the firing had now ceased, and, as the party went at a hand gallop down the alleys of Salcock, they could hear, louder and louder, at every bound, the tumultuous hubbub of a hand to hand contest. At length they burst in upon the scene of action; it was a level green among the trees, through the stems and under the branches of which, the setting sun poured his radiance on as bloody a spectacle for its extent, as ever met the eye of day. The little round of pasture was covered with dead and dying, among whom the survivors, so locked and mingled, as hardly to be distinguished, reeled to and fro in one body, shaking the ground with their tramp, and thrusting or striking in the silence of savage determination. But though the men on either side fought without war cry or clamour, the crush and

collision, and the redoubling clang of blows made a fearful din.

The appearance of Burnel's reinforcement decided the day. At their first charge, both citizens and rebels were driven off; for they were so grappled, that no man could tell at which side his own friends pushed or resisted. It was a pitiable sight, when the ground was cleared, to see the wan wretches who had been driven to the field by hunger, bleeding among the rushes, as in a shambles, beside the bodies of the cattle they had hoped to consume; for, the first attack of musketry, both man and beast had fallen where they stood. Burnel's troop now charged through the glades in pursuit; for some more desperate than the rest, had made a stand among the trees, and were again beginning to ply their matchlocks. As Talbot followed with his men, across the open space where the dead lay thickest, his eye caught an object on the ground, that made him pull up with such a strain, as nearly threw his horse upon his haunches. A sword of rich workmanship, which he had often admired, over the mantelpiece of Paul Dudley, lay broken in two, among the long grass. He leaped from the saddle, and turned the prostrate man that lay nearest, on his back. It was the loyal merchant; but so disfigured with wounds, so wasted by toil and suffering, that his own son could hardly have known his features at the first look.

"Alas!" cried Talbot, raising the passive body, and propping it against his knee, "can this be the good old man—can this indeed, be the loyal and kind Paul Dudley?" The fainting merchant slowly opened his eyes, and gazed upon the scene of carnage; but when, on looking up, he saw the face of Talbot bending over him, he closed them again with a convulsive effort that told how sick a pang the sight had cost him, and groaned deeply.

"He is not dead," exclaimed the knight; "but I fear his cumbrous coat of mail is smothering him! What, ho, ye knaves, dismount! there is blood enough shed!—villains, come back and help me to undo the wounded gentleman's gorget!—his life is worth more than all we have lost to-day! By heaven, if you let him die among your rude hands, I will strike my dagger through some of your bodies! There—lift him up—let the air to his face—ah, this Milan shirt, it is choking him! Oh, Heaven! that he should have been driven to load his aged limbs with such a weight of iron!—water, ye dogs, bring water in your helmets;—there is a brook in the hollow—haste, haste for your lives!"

Just then, a horseman, reeking from the slaughter, galloped into the little plain. "Sir John Talbot, your troop is wanted in the wood. Lord Thomas has sent to know why you delay? The loyalists have made another stand: three of our captains are slain: mount, Sir John Talbot, this is no time for hanging back."

"I care not who stands, or who falls, here I stay, sir, till I see this aged gentleman cared for," cried Talbot; "and as for hanging back, I tell thee, Christopher Perez, that if I were not supporting the head of a man I love too dearly, to leave for so light a cause, I would drive the falsehood down thy dishonourable throat!—villain, see to what you have brought us!"

"Sir John Talbot," cried Perez, "the blade that is glued to its scabbard by an 'if,' gives me little apprehension; I scorn the threats of a braggart."

"Put thy knee under his head, Art; thou wert ever the kindliest of thy company," said Talbot, in a low voice, as he transferred his charge to the hands of one of his troopers, "and if I fall, carry him in a litter to the priory hospital, and tell the almoner it was my last

request that he should be kindly nursed." Then rising, he drew his sword, and motioned to Perez to follow him a little apart from the spot where Dudley lay. Perez, whose weapon was out and already steeped in blood, turned pale when he saw himself summoned to a more equal combat than that in which he had so cheaply fleshed it; he seemed to debate with himself whether he ought not to charge upon his enemy and trample him under his horse's feet; but casting his eyes on the soldiery around, he abandoned a design so perilous, and sullenly followed his adversary on foot.

They engaged with all the hate that rivalry and mutual insult can kindle in the human breast; but both were clad in complete armour, and for some time their deadliest strokes fell harmless on the cold iron. The clang was like that of the armourer's hammer, and for a while the eyes of the spectators were dazzled with the equal comminglement of their weapons. But ere long, Perez was giving back under the incessant battery which Talbot showered, swift as whirling sleet, upon his head; he reeled—staggered—and then in desperation rushed in, and they closed with a clash of their breastplates like twenty pair of cymbals. Both were strong men, and both tugged for life or death, for they knew that, once down, the dagger of the uppermost would soon make its way where the sword had failed. Down they went at length with a sidelong flash in the sun, and a crush of plate and mail that sent the sound of its heavy dint an arrow flight into the woods around. They rolled and grappled for a moment, and none could tell which was uppermost; when, in the height of the struggle, Lord Thomas Fitzgerald and his company galloped in upon the ground. Talbot had at last got the advantage, and planted his knee upon his prostrate adversary's breast,

his dagger was out, and he was holding down Perez's right hand with his left, and calling on him to beg his life, while the other with the gauntlet of that hand which was at liberty, was shielding his throat where he expected the descending blow—

"For shame, gentlemen, for shame! hold your hand, Sir John Talbot! I am your general, and I command you hold your hand!" cried Lord Thomas, as he leaped from the saddle, and seized the arm of the knight, whom he dragged bodily off his enemy.

"My lord, this is my private quarrel; I will let no man stand between me and my just vengeance!" cried Talbot, fiercely, shaking himself free, and rushing upon his antagonist again; but Burnel, De La Hyde, and the rest, came between, and held him back by main force. Perez got up with a countenance as black as night, the cold sweat standing in beads upon his forehead, and every joint trembling with rage and shame. "I will be avenged yet—I will, by Him that made us both!" he exclaimed and turned away.

Lord Thomas now addressed Talbot, "Sir John, Sir John, what mean you by this conduct? Are you weary of the service? Would you return to your allegiance? Say so at once, if you wish it; but balk us not by seeming to be our friend, and acting in such a time of need so like an enemy."

"My lord, I am not your enemy," cried Talbot, "but I had neither been a man nor a Christian had I left him that loved me as a father loves his son, to perish upon the field where your lordship's troops were already victorious. I drew this sword, my lord, against King Henry for the sake of the father of my orphan childhood; for his sake I have borne the displeasure of the only other friend I ever had; of one who would have

been a second father to me if my loyalty to you had not rejected the bounties he would have poured upon me, and outraged the love and kindness that was already mine. My lord, that ill-requited friend lies yonder bleeding to death ; his only child will soon be fatherless —she is motherless already—my lord and gentlemen, I am betrothed to Dudley's daughter, and I will not leave him to die deserted, though I should lose my own life by his side ! ” He strode forward to the spot where Dudley lay. Those around yielded him a passage, and many at the moment exclaimed that he was right. As he knelt again by the side of the dying man, the troopers and captains who had heard him drew back with compassionate delicacy, and left them alone among the dead.

“ Master Dudley, will you give me your forgiveness ? ” said the knight, as he took the merchant's cold hand in his.

Dudley opened his eyes and looked mournfully upon him. “ I am going fast, Sir John,” he whispered faintly ; “ I bear no anger against any man.”

“ Shall I call to them to send a priest ? ” asked the knight, raising him higher in his arms.

“ I am shrived—I die at peace with the world—I did not think you loved me so well, Sir John,” said the old man, and was silent. Talbot could not speak ; but his tears fell on the face of the dying merchant, as he lay in his arms quite still for about a minute. At last he sighed deeply, and looked again in the face of his supporter, while his hand, cold as it was, faintly returned the pressure. “ Ellen, my child,” he murmured in a voice hardly audible, but Talbot bent over him and caught every sound. “ She has none now to protect her—take her—my wealth is in jewels—take all and may God bless you ! ” Talbot's heart was in his throat ; he could make no reply, and both were again silent, but the merchant with a last effort

roused himself and cried in a clear voice—"My son, with the last breath I shall ever draw, I say, abandon this rebellion—give it up whenever you can without dishonour, and save the race of an honest man from shame!" He fell back as he spoke, and, after a feebly drawn sigh or two, expired.

Talbot laid him softly down, and called his men to bear the body to Kilmainham; but De La Hyde, when he saw him rise, advanced, and taking him by the hand, said, "Talbot, time presses; we can wait no longer. You are to return to Artane in company with Burnel. On my honour, I am grieved for this; but they all insist upon it, and Lord Thomas has been forced to consent. Ah! the brave old man, he's gone; but you may leave him without fear; he shall have Christian burial; I give you my hand upon it, he shall."

"De La Hyde, I thank thee; I am content; but for the others, I did not look for this at their hands."

"Parez's account of the affair has enraged them beyond measure, and Travers is there denouncing heretics and blasphemers; but they and Lord Thomas are now gone, and Burnel awaits you. Farewell, you have my word that I will see him cared for."

Talbot wrung De La Hyde's hand, and, with a bursting heart, leaped upon his horse and led his troop off the field.

"I must stop now," said Turlogh; "I hear some one coming. I shall tell you more about the lovers to-morrow night."

NINTH NIGHT.

WHEN the princes and Turlogh were left alone next night, there was little time lost in conversation, as all were anxious to hear the remainder of Silken Thomas.

"Come on, Turlogh," cried Hugh Roe, "I am longing to mount the breach of Maynooth Castle."

"We will hardly push our siege so far to-night, O'Donnell," said the bard; "I must first tell you something more about the lovers:—where did we leave them?"

"Talbot had returned to Artane, after the fight at Salcock," Henry replied; "and I can tell you I look to hear of a wedding shortly, now that the match has got the consent of all parties, and that Ellen Dudley has been left unprotected by her father's death. Poor old Paul! I wish you had not killed him so soon! he and Connor Kelly, were the two best men in your story, and here you have cut them off for no reason that I can divine, unless it be that the knaves and traitors of the tale have no longer need of their intervention. Parez, I'll warrant, will be left to play his villainies to the last; and, as for your hero, I hardly think he can continue honest much longer."

"If Talbot turn loyalist again, I'll never forgive him!" exclaimed Art.

"He has been ill used," said Henry; "and if I were in his place, though I don't say that I would turn Saxon, I'd certainly put Dudley's daughter and the jewels, on board old Paul's swiftest bark, and seek a safer home and kinder friends elsewhere."

Here Hugh broke in. "When I had drawn the sword once, I would never sheath it till I had seen the work done; and if I loved a lady, I would rather ask her to

share my honourable hardships, at the expense of her ease, than my ignominious security at the cost of my own self-esteem; for neither peril nor distress can so afflict a generous mind, as the thought that those we love have made themselves despicable in their own eyes for our sake. But I have no fear for the man that said he loved his honour better than either life or love: no,—Lord Thomas may not have done by him as he ought; and by Columb Kill, the more the shame and the greater the pity; but Talbot will never turn recreant, of that I am assured. He has been to blame in not doing his duty as a soldier ought, cheerfully and freely; but in the matter of giving up the sword, he played the part of a gallant gentleman, and he would be one without a heart that could find fault with him for his kindly conduct by the brave old merchant. I agree with Henry, I would fain have known somewhat more of Paul Dudley before he died; for, by my faith, he was a better man than I even looked to see under his faded doublet."

"It is one comfort," said Art, "that he died in peace. *Dar brighe mo vaiste*, Turlogh, if you had left him to expire with his old heart so full of bitterness as it must have been, had he not discovered in good time that his child was still secure of the protection and tender care, from another, which she was losing by his own death;—if you had left the worthy old man to quit the world so wretchedly, Turlogh, I could not have slept last night, for sorrow on his account, and anger against you?"

Turlogh shook his head and smiled: "Ah, my Princes," cried he, "it lies not in me to decree the honour or shame, the joy or grief of those whose fortunes I have to relate to you. As I have heard the tale I have to tell it; I am glad to think that Dudley's death has not been without its alleviation; but if Sir John Talbot do aught to merit

your censure, I can only lament the mishap of a brave gentleman, in whom, I hope you all take as great an interest as myself :" so saying, he addressed himself to his tale.

THE REBELLION OF SILKEN THOMAS.

PART SECOND.

THE citizens of Dublin were now less obstinate in refusing to give the insurgent forces access to the Castle through their gates ; and negotiations for that purpose were again opened. On the evening of the first day of the truce that succeeded, Sir John Talbot, wrapped in his cloak, passed into the city, unobserved among the multitude that flocked from all quarters with provisions for the famishing inhabitants, for the poorer classes had already suffered dreadfully from hunger. The streets were thronged with gaunt crowds, some laughing, some weeping—mothers and their children, their faces smeared with the raw oatmeal which they ravened up from the sack mouth, tottering upon the causeways ; then the rebel soldiery, flushed with their success, and insolent in their anticipated triumph, shouting and singing in the streets, and the disheartened loyalists, on the Castle walls, replying with faint cheers at intervals, and every now and again, the sound of a solitary shot against the batteries begun in Preston's Inns, fronting the barbican, together made a bewildering hubbub, like the noise in a dream.

Talbot treading the intricate throng, with hurrying steps and a beating heart. Each pale face that passed him seemed like a spectre glaring through the twilight ; the confused noises that surrounded him fell on his ear like a general lamentation. When he reached Dudley's-court, doors and windows were barred, and all was silent as the grave. " Ah ! " he exclaimed, " here is an altered house-

hold; my poor Ellen, this shock will have broken her heart! but thank God that I bear her some comfort; she will need it now more than ever;—but, good Heaven, they cannot surely have left the house!" he cried, as the echoes of the heavy knocker died away in the silence of the empty court-yard. His heart sank as he listened in vain for any indication of reply; his first idea was, that they had perhaps gone to Kilmainham; but this he rejected, unconscious of any reason, and walked with a quick but unsteady step round to the garden side. He clambered over the wall; the flowers were trampled and tangled, and the place did not look like itself. He ran to Ellen Dudley's window; there was no answer to his tap upon the pane. He called her name; there was no reply but the echo. The thought that all had perished of famine then fell upon his soul with the coldness of death; he tore open the window and rushed in. The chamber was empty, the hall was dark and silent—thank God his first fear was groundless; they were all gone; but he dared not ask his heart whither, for the presentiment of some undefined calamity, admitted nothing but suggestions of horror. He opened a door, and passed like a sleepwalker into the court-yard; then staggered out upon the wharf. Here, on the shank of a broken anchor, sat an old serving-man gazing down the river.

"Friend! oh, where are they gone?" cried he.

"Some to Skinner-row for meal; some to the Bridge-foot for a sheep," replied the sailor; "we are all discharged now, since the old master was slain at Salcock."

"But his family—his daughter—where is she? she has gone to the house of some of her father's friends—has she not?"

"No, master; she has gone with the Archbishop."

"With the Archbishop! what right had the Archbishop to take her away? Is not Archbishop Alan with White in the Castle?"

"He left the Castle this morning, master, for he feared it could not hold out against the rebels, now that they have got within the city walls; and when he came here and found the poor young lady almost heartbroken, with neither father nor mother, nor any friend to protect her, and the household broken up, and she without brother or sister ——"

"Speak out, Sir! death and perdition! what has Alan dared to do with Master Dudley's daughter?"

"The Archbishop has taken young mistress Ellen with him; and right glad any friend of the house ought to be to know she is in such holy keeping. I hope they will be safe in Bristol before to-morrow night; why, Sir, I have been watching them here, and praying them a good passage for the last hour and better." As he spoke, he pointed down the river, where a bark was dimly visible in the twilight, beating out into the open bay.

"A boat, a boat!" cried Talbot, casting off his cloak; "we can overtake them, yet! the wind is all against them! Traitor priest, you shall not rob me! false prelate, I will have her back, though I break thy crosier for it!—Ten rose nobles for a boat! call Connor Kelly; where is the *bouchal ghasta*?—ah! I am raving! Friend, help me to get a boat; I will give ten pieces of gold to be put on board yonder ship."

"They are far beyond the reach of pursuit," replied the man; "no open boat could live in the sea that is now running on the bar. The Archbishop's bark, that is a stout vessel of an hundred tons, will have enough to do to clear the Bull."

"Eternal curses! and she is to be carried off before my eyes! ho, sirrah, is the Archbishop's vessel armed?"

"Better manned and armed than any other that has left the port since the troubles began: you may make up your mind to let them go where they will this bout, master."

Talbot stood for a minute silent, with clenched hands and a swelling heart, gazing blankly at the receding sail; at length he demanded, "Went she of her own free will?" and then, before the man had time to make answer, exclaimed against the Archbishop. "She never went with her will! Alan has forced her off! Went she with her will? I say again, sirrah!" But the man had risen in horror and alarm, and was closing the wicket of the court-yard behind him, as Talbot turned to repeat the question. Uttering many an exclamation of furious purport, he paced up and down the deserted wharf, sometimes stopping and straining his eyes to catch a glimpse of the dim sail; then turning abruptly, as if he could not bear the sight of it; and then again searching the grey distance to take another last look, blank and despairing; but the indistinct outline had melted ere long into the wide misty horizon, and he was left alone among the deep shades of evening, with the rising winds whistling desolately along the unmanned ramparts overhead, and sweeping up the bare expanse of the river into the black and angry tumult at his feet. With a heart full of rage and sorrow, he returned by the water's edge, and recrossed the bridge as the darkness of night set in.

The night fell black and stormy, and, as he rode back to Artane—for he had left his horse without the walls—the wind raged among the woods as wildly as when he made that fatal visit for the last time to Ellen Dudley. Bitter as his reflections had then been, still more bitter, beyond comparison of wretchedness, were they now. His fancy

had taken a new turn, and now, instead of furnishing him with causes of anger against the Archbishop, overwhelmed his heart with suggestions favouring the idea of Ellen Dudley's voluntary flight. Two days had elapsed since she was left without a protector, and, although the service in which he was, during that time, reluctantly engaged, had made communication or interview impossible, yet she, ignorant as she was of that impediment, might well consider herself neglected, and justly resent his seeming desertion at a time of such unmitigated distress. Then, her father's death by the hands of his comrades, was enough to make a child so affectionate shrink for a while, under any circumstances, from her constancy to him; but what stung his soul with the severest pang was the thought, which he could not shake off for a moment, that she might have suspected him of letting the old man be slain when it was in his power to have saved his life; nay, horrible as the idea was, of even procuring his death, that Dudley might no longer stand between him and the fulfilment of the promise she had made of marrying him at once if left without another guardian. He could not believe this: his heart loathed the thought; but he could not banish it from his mind, and his anguish almost rose to frenzy. He galloped madly forward through the darkness, reckless of his safety, cursing the hour of his birth, and baring his breast to the storm that was now raging far and wide across the level country, till he came to the open uplands beyond the Tolka, where the deep roar of the breakers on Clontarf strand first caught his ear. He pulled up, and, half unconsciously, turned his face towards the sea. A pale line of light marked the sweep of the surf, but all beyond was dark as midnight. "A wild night for your voyage, Ellen dear," he cried; "they had

hard hearts that could force you on the sea such a night as this!"

As he spoke, a flash suddenly broke through the gloom in the offing. He held his breath and listened, while the tear trembling on his eyelid was dried up in the absorbing intensity of his gaze: he heard nothing but the breakers and the groaning of the trees—could it have been the fire glancing from his own strained eyeballs?—no—there was another flash! and he now heard plainly over the mingling roar of waves, and woods, the report of a gun. "The Archbishop is making signals of distress!" he exclaimed; "he is driving ashore—thank God, thank God, I may save her yet!" and, dashing the spurs into his horse's flanks, he never drew bridle till he reached Artane—"Up, up," he cried; "arm, good fellows, and follow me—to the shore, to the strand—bring ropes and tackle and make for the stranded ship;" and, heading seaward, he again urged his horse through brake and furrow at desperate speed to the shore. While he descended to the sea, flash after flash gave momentary glimpses of the driving wreck, as she came broadside on before the waves; but when the sound of his horse's feet was lost at last upon the sands, the bark became visible without the light of signals. Her black hull now heaved high against the obscure horizon; and now nothing was to be seen above the weltering seas but her bulwarks, and the torn rigging streaming from the stump of her broken mast. Their last gun, fired when they were driving within fifty yards of the beach, showed the crew, crowding the deck, all ghastly as phantoms in the sudden light; and, while the flash was still before Talbot's eyes, shrieks rang from the quivering planks, and the remnant of mast and tackle went over board as she took the ground. The water was shallow to the very verge of the shelf on which

she struck ; for she had driven in the channel of the Tolka, which there flows into the bay, and the tide had been for a short time on the ebb ; so that Talbot, who knew the ground, and was a practised swimmer, did not hesitate to dash into the surf and make straight for the wreck. The violence of the breakers drove him back twice ; but after a hard struggle he made good his hold at the third attempt, and was the first man to climb the side of the stranded vessel. It was so dark he could not tell the face of a man on board ; but hearing a voice he knew in the waist, he went thither, and found the Archbishop, surrounded by his servants, holding on under shelter of the bulwark, and loud in prayer.

“ My lord archbishop, where is that young gentlewoman you took away from Dudley’s-court this morning ? ” were Talbot’s first words, shouted through the drift of spray that fell in showers over their heads.

“ Help me, for the love of God : I am a Christian bishop ! ” exclaimed Alan.

“ Help you shall have, my lord,” replied Talbot ; “ but the lady must be saved first—where is she ? ”

“ Alas, I cannot tell ;—help, help ! I will give a purse of gold to the man that will help me on shore ! ”

“ Sordid churl, thou and thy gold perish together ! where is the lady you stole away from Dudley’s-court this morning ? ”

“ Sir John, Oh Sir John Talbot, I am here ! ” cried a weak voice from the hatches, and ere the words were well spoken, Ellen Dudley was in his arms.

By this time the soldiery from Artane had reached the strand, and some riding into the surf had thrown the ends of coiled ropes on board, while others were buffeting the waves and striving to climb on deck. When the Archbishop’s people saw the means of escape at hand, they

crowded to the side of the vessel ; but Talbot, still supporting his almost speechless burden, called to the sailing master, and demanded how long the hull could bear the beating of the seas without risk of going to pieces. The seaman replied that there was no danger for another hour, at the least.

"Then let us wait till the ebb of the tide shall have left us a safer passage," cried Talbot ; "there will not be more than a foot of water under our lee in two hours; so that you, my lord archbishop, and your attendants, may be carried on shore in perfect safety. Since you have pleaded for him, Ellen," he added, "I will not drive him through the surf, as he deserves, and as I would have done, but for your intercession. I knew you never left me with your own will ! "

"Do not threaten him, he is a Christian bishop," cried Ellen, shuddering. "What he did was by my father's desire; he told me so. The Archbishop confessed him that morning before he went away :—Oh that he had never gone ! oh that my prayers and tears could have prevailed to make him stay within the walls ! He will never return now—no—no—I am left alone in the world; my father lies unburied on the bare earth ! "

"No; Ellen," said Talbot in a low voice; "I got for him Christian burial; and while I live you shall not be left alone ! "

"Ah ! you saw him," she cried; "and could you not save him ? could you not have arrested their murderous hands ? Sir John, how could you have the heart to look on at his death ? "

"Ellen, as I hope for salvation, I did not come upon the field till the deed was done, and the cruel doers of it gone ; but, thank God, he lived long enough to forgive me ; ay, and with his last breath to bless us both ; yes, Ellen, he

has again blessed our marriage—you are mine at last—you shall be no longer without a protector. It is no time for hesitation or delay; you have no one to go to here; and, bitter though your woe must be for a season, trust me, your mourning as my wife will be a sweeter tribute to his memory than your lonely sorrowing in unprotected orphanhood. You will come with me now, my own love; there is a holy father at Artane that will join our hands to-night."

"Oh, not so soon, not so soon," she replied, weeping; "oh, what a weight you have taken off my heart; but I would rather go for a time with the Archbishop: he can procure me a reception into some pious sisterhood, where I may remain in safety for a little longer—I cannot think of bridals now; it were unjust to you to burden you with my grief; oh, let me go with the Archbishop till I can give you my hand without dishonour to my father's memory."

"The Archbishop is unworthy of your confidence, Ellen," said Talbot; "it was but now he offered me a purse of your father's gold to save his life, and when I asked where you were, the selfish churl had forgotten that there was such a being on board: you might have drowned for him; but I'll be sworn he has taken good care of the treasure and jewels. My lord archbishop,"—for by this time they were all under the hatches, where, by the light of a lantern swinging from the sloped ceiling, they awaited the receding of the tide under comparative shelter,—"my lord archbishop, what is that casket which you grasp so closely?"

"Martyrs and saints!" exclaimed the trembling prelate, "what mean these unmannered demands?—wouldst thou rob me of the goods of the church?"

"These are no goods of the church," cried Talbot, pointing to the name of Paul Dudley on the lid of the

box ; "these jewels are the inheritance of this lady—I ask her has she given them with her own will to this avaricious churchman ?"

"Oh, Sir John, I beseech you, speak less irreverently," cried Ellen ; "I have not given them away; I thought them safer in the hands of the holy prelate, who offered to take charge of them for me; but indeed they are still mine—his lordship has misunderstood my purpose."

"I call all Christians here to witness," exclaimed the Archbishop, as Talbot took the casket from his hands, "that I am violently despoiled of the free gift of this ungrateful woman, by blasphemous and masterful traitors, whom I here do now, by the authority —"

"Oh, mercy, mercy, my lord !" exclaimed Ellen Dudley, and would have thrown herself upon her knees before the enraged prelate, but the footing was so insecure, that she had to be supported by those around, and they restrained her ; "Oh, my lord, curse him not!—take the gold, take the jewels, take all, but do not curse us, and I will pray for you so long as I live ! "

"Let him curse !" cried Talbot ; "I dread no malediction of a dishonest man!—is not this he whose forged report of the old Earl's death has driven us all into rebellion without a cause ? Ay, Archbishop Alan, you were the man, who to gratify the spite you cherished against the noble house of Kildare, first spread that most insidious and destructive falsehood ; raising the rumour of a murder that had never been committed, nor in danger of commission now, but for the fatal belief that men too easily deceived, put in your dishonourable devices ; and, now, like a coward caitiff, you fly from the war you have yourself thus basely succeeded in enflaming !—here, Art, the passage to the beach is safe ; take this lord archbishop—on your life do him no injury, for though he be the prime

causer of all our ills, he is still a Christian priest, whose body is sacred and inviolable : bear him safely to Artane, and lodge him with all respectful observance in my own quarters, till we receive the commands of the Earl himself, regarding his further disposal. I shall be at the post within the hour, or, at farthest, before sunrise."

The galloglass, among whom it was already generally known, that Alan had been the originator of the false report of the Earl of Kildare's murder—that report upon which they had at first risen in arms against the King, hastened with alacrity to obey the commands of their captain, and seizing the prelate and his attendants, bore them through the now shallower breakers to the shore, whence the Archbishop was transported to Talbot's quarters, as had been commanded.

"Do not shudder, Ellen," said Sir John, when they were left alone in the little cabin ; "he who profanes his ministry is no longer a minister of God—if Alan had cursed me, there would be no efficacy in his words."

"Oh, thank Heaven he did not!" she replied ; "Sir John, Sir John, your language was most impious ; and, though I never could have thought Archbishop Alan would have done by my father's daughter as he sought to do by me regarding these jewels, yet I would rather they were sunk in the sea that is now beating against this ill-fated vessel, than that one—one whom I love so well—alas, and for a moment, I almost thought, too well—should come under the awful ban of the minister of God. I will humble myself in timely penance ; and oh, Sir John, if you love me, repent also, and make fit satisfaction to the church for your sin."

"May Heaven forgive me, if I have done wrong," cried Talbot ; "but as I look for mercy, I could not have said less to the covetous hypocrite, if it had been to save

my neck from the block—but for your sake I will confess and do what penance I may have incurred. I think we can get safely ashore now; the violence of the breakers is greatly abated: I know an honourable gentlewoman living near Nicholas' gate, to whom, if you will, I shall bear you: I will pledge my honour for your tender and worthy treatment: she is a near kinswoman of my own, and will gladly do a service to the son of my mother."

Ellen gave him her hand, but she spoke sorrowfully as she added, "I would to God this quarrel with the Archbishop had never happened!"

"I will make satisfaction to the church, Ellen; I will," he replied, as he bore her in his arms to the side of the vessel. Ropes were stretched from the beach, and a party of his men who had been ordered to remain, stood up to the middle in the water, holding lights, and ready to receive his burden in their arms, but Talbot plunged among the breakers with Ellen clasped to his own breast, and bore her himself in safety to the dry land.

The wreck was now deserted, and the crew dispersed. Talbot left a guard upon the beach to prevent plunder, then placed his precious charge upon his own horse, sprang on before her, and attended by a few galloglass, set forward once more for the city.

As they rode along, the sense of her entire dependence on her companion grew stronger every moment in the heart of Ellen Dudley. Riding with her arms clasped around him, she felt that, without him, she would be as weak as the ivy without its sustaining oak. Her trust in the Archbishop was gone; nay, she would almost have viewed him with contempt, but for her awe of his office: that awe, however, made her shudder as often as she thought of the indignation he had expressed against

her. Then to throw herself upon the benevolence of total strangers (for Paul Dudley's relative lived in Bristol), and that for the sake of indulging in unavailing sorrow, which, although it might for the time gratify her filial piety, yet only postponed the exercise of that better influence which she hoped to use with him whose fortunes she must sooner or later share; to do this began to appear to her, rather as a selfish consideration of the world, than as a performance of her higher duties towards him for whose good she was now bound to sacrifice every consideration that did not involve her own self-respect. While these thoughts passed through her mind, Talbot did not cease to urge upon her every representation that could render them more influential; so that when at last as they approached the end of their journey, he besought of her to let their hands be joined on the next day, she could only reply by entreating of him in return, that he would consent to abandon the insurgent cause, and fly with her to Waterford, whence they might make their escape to the continent in safety.

"Ellen," said Talbot, when, with tears and entreaties, she had so far stipulated, "when I asked yon to desert your father, you told me that I could not have loved you as I said I did, had I believed that you would have yielded to that solicitation. Can you love me, and believe that I would thus abandon my honour? Your father, with the last words he ever spoke, besought me to give up the cause; and I vowed in my heart—for, alas, he could not have heard my answer, had I spoken it—that when I could, without dishonour, leave the island, I would. It was all he asked, and I promise it to you as to him. I have been basely treated; but, although others may play an ungrateful and foul part by me, I cannot suffer their dishonour to justify mine. I would, Ellen, I were free

to fly with you ; but it cannot be. Still, even as I am, I can afford you protection. We may, at least, be happy in ourselves : this war will not last long ; we must soon either be secure in victory, or free to save ourselves as we best can, without scruple. And now, since Heaven's will is manifest in your restoration to me—for surely the hand of Providence was visibly put forth on our behalf this night—since winds and waves have conspired to return you to my arms ; now, too, that our union has been once more sanctioned, and the blessing again bequeathed to us, wed me at once, Ellen dear, and come what may I shall at least be loyal to the love I bear you to the last.' His suit prevailed, and ere they parted, Ellen Dudley had consented that the next day should see her united to him in the bonds of wedlock.

Talbot's kinswoman received her charge with all the kindly care he had expected. The household was raised, and much hospitable zeal shown in affording fit refreshment both to the weary lady and her escort. Full of joy, Talbot remained, long after Ellen had retired to rest, recounting their story to his hostess, and arranging with her for their approaching nuptials. Dame Margaret Keating was a tender-hearted and pious lady : she shed abundance of tears over the poor girl's misfortunes as Talbot related them to her, and not only approved of their immediate marriage, but engaged to procure the services of her brother, a priest, who would attend next morning, two hours before noon, to perform the marriage ceremony at her house.

Talbot at length departed for his quarters. He had never ridden that way but with a heavy heart before ; he was now full of joy and triumph. He found his men at their posts ; the Archbishop was asleep in his hut, and Lord Thomas had been apprised of his capture. Talbot

took a light, and entered his cabin: it consisted of two apartments, opening from a wide hall, and having a door of communication inside. In that to the left, in which he ordinarily slept, the Archbishop now lay. The door of the chamber to the right was fastened inside, so that to get to it he had to go through the other: he entered softly, and as he passed the Archbishop's bed, shaded the light from the sleeping prelate's face; for, when he heard his breathing calm and regular, and saw him lying so placidly at rest, he could not but feel remorse for his violent conduct towards him: "For surely," he thought, "no man, with such a conscience as I then thought him to possess, could sleep so calmly in such a situation. Heaven pardon me if I have done him wrong! If it has been so, I will make satisfaction to him; and by my honour I fear I have. Yet he confessed it: it was for the sake of the jewels he took her with him, and she might have drowned, for him, while he had the casquet. Well, I shall stretch myself upon my bench, and dream of Ellen Dudley; this time to-morrow my happiness will no longer be a dream."

He passed into the vacant apartment, closed the door of communication, and, having laid his sword and dagger on the table, wrapped himself up in his cloak, and fell fast asleep on the bench.

Wearied, from his day's exertions, and comparatively at ease in mind, Talbot had neither dream nor consciousness for he knew not how long, till he was suddenly aroused by the noise of violence in the next apartment. "Spare me, spare me! I am a Christian bishop," cried a voice agonizingly piercing.

"His words were, 'Make away with the boddagh,'" exclaimed another: "we have his words for it, and we will do it!" Then came blows, groans, and the sound of some one falling.

Talbot, at the first alarm, leaped to his feet. It was still so dark, he could see nothing distinctly, and, for a moment, he forgot where he was. Instinctively he stretched out his hand for his wearons. They were gone. Recollection flashed upon his mind. "By heaven, they are murdering the Archbishop!" he exclaimed, and, without waiting to search further for his arms, rushed into the room. He had no weapon, but with his naked hands he struck down two of the assailants; two more he dragged bodily off the prostrate churchman, furiously demanding who they were, and by whose authority they dared do violence to a Christian prelate under his protection: "Villains and murderers, who are ye? It is I, Sir John Talbot, captain of the guard, who ask. Hold off, ye dogs, would ye strike the minister of God? Ho, Art MacConnogher! Barry Oge! Redmond and Gillaspike! treason, ho! turn out, ye heavy-headed knaves; here is murder done within your post."

As he spoke, there was a trampling of horses in the street, and a blaze of torchlight came flashing through the door and window. The light revealed the dead body of the Archbishop lying on the floor, covered with wounds, as he had been dragged out of his bed; but the murderers all, save two, were gone. These, with their ensanguined weapons in their hands, stood half irresolute, ferocity and apprehension strangely mingled in their looks. "Who are ye, ye blood-thirsty and accursed villains?" cried Talbot.

"We are *Tomás-an-Teeda's* men," replied one of them, still panting, from his fierce excitement; "and we have done as you see, Sir John Talbot, by the orders of our general."

"Bloodhound, it is false!" exclaimed Talbot. "Lord Thomas Fitzgerald is no assassin of Christian bishops."

"This was no Christian bishop!" exclaimed the other vehemently; "and what we say is not false! This was an unchristian hypocrite, prelate as he was, and what we have done is no more than was commanded us; ay, and not so much as this false priest's treachery and malice have well merited."

"If Lord Thomas Fitzgerald have commanded this most hateful murder, I will never draw my sword in his quarrel again!" cried Talbot; but, ere he had said more, Lord Thomas himself, attended by his friends, entered the hall.

"What murder, Sir John Talbot? who dares to say that I have commanded murder?" he exclaimed, as he entered the apartment; but, almost stumbling over the dead body which lay on the very threshold, he started back in horror and confusion. "Oh, my God, what is this?" he cried, and turned deadly pale. "Villains that ye are, what is this that you have done?"

"My lord, we have but done as your lordship commanded," answered one of the murderers, but his voice had lost its former confidence. "My lord, your lordship's words were, 'Make away with the clown.' We did it on these words that your lordship spoke. My lord, we have but played the part of faithful servants."

He would have pleaded further, but Lord Thomas interrupted him: "Nicholas Wafer, you have done me more disservice by this one blow that I would have dreaded from the swords of ten thousand Englishmen! My words were, 'Take the clown away:' I could not bear the sight of the man who had so foully wronged us all; but I take Heaven to witness, I never meant that he should come by violence at the hands of any. 'Take the clown away' were my words, Nicholas Wafer! and by my troth, if I find that you have wilfully misconstrued my design,

you shall both hang high, and that right speedily, from the broadest oak upon Drumcondra."

"If, my lord!" cried Talbot. "Does your lordship not mean, then, to execute the villains out of hand?"

"Sir John Talbot," replied Lord Thomas, "this is my injury, and it shall be redressed as I think fit."

"My lord, I say the injury is mine," cried Talbot, fiercely. "Here is a Christian bishop murdered; here are the murderers, reeking from that accursed slaughter, and confessing that they did it; and here stand I to claim vengeance on the assassins, I care not by whom set on, or by what error in interpreting your words. How comes it, my lord, that this prelate is dragged out of his bed by murderers in your lordship's train, without notice given to me, who held him in my custody?"

"Sir John Talbot," replied Lord Thomas, "there is no need to rouse a keeper who is so rarely at his post: this, sir, is not the first occasion on which you have left Artane contrary to your commands, on I know not what adventure in the camp and city of our enemies: I do hope these clandestine expeditions may have had a more honourable aim than I have heard associated with them: you were not summoned, Sir John Talbot, because you are seldom here to summon, and what dealings I desired with this ill-fated prelate I could practise without the presence or countenance of a keeper, who was but by chance at hand."

"My lord, whoever told your lordship that my absences, which have been two, from Artane—not against command, my Lord Thomas, but at my own pleasure, as discretionary captain of this post—have had other than an honourable aim; he, I say, is a slanderer and a villain, and if your lordship produce him not to make good his tale, then do you yourself, my Lord Thomas Fitzgerald, receive

my denial of the falsehood, and render me amends for this base injury in his stead ! ”

“ Insolent rebel ! ” exclaimed the enraged lord, and drew his sword to rush upon Talbot. Those around withheld him, while his antagonist, all on fire for the fight, clapped his hand to his side ; but no weapon was there, and he suddenly remembered, that on awaking he could not find his sword.

“ Give him his sword, and let him come on ! ” shouted Lord Thomas ; but Parez stepped forward, and said, “ I am he who told this tale of Sir John Talbot ; that tale I tell again, and I say farther, that he, six several times, has left his post to practise with the enemy ; that he is a recreant and a traitor, and that I will make good my words at peril of my body ! ”

“ It is a lie ! I claim the combat,” exclaimed Talbot.

“ I accept the challenge, and, for the ‘ liar ’ you have given, I will drive it down your false throat with my sword’s point on any ground in Ireland ! ” cried Parez ; but Lord Thomas, still struggling with his withholders, commanded to give the knight his weapon, and let them fight it out. And now Talbot, standing unarmed, and alone in the midst of enemies, would have fallen an easy sacrifice to the hate of those who thirsted for his blood, had not Art MacConnogher with about a dozen of the Artane galloglass, suddenly made their appearance on the scene.

“ Noble Sir,” said Art as he entered, with shouldered battleaxe, and his skene stuck bare in his belt, “ we are here to do your commands, as is fit that true men should. Our sentries have been dismissed, Sir John, and their places supplied from my lord’s own troop, but our guard was not permitted to be called out, or we would have been with your nobleness in better time.”

"Obey the Lord Thomas, Art," said Talbot; "I am no longer your captain; Artane we could, I think, have held against the enemy; but you are here surprised by your friends."

"*Dar lamh mo choirp*, Sir John, surprise, or no surprise, my father's son does no man's bidding but your nobleness's! Come on Redmond, Barry Oge bring in the kern: we stand by the captain, *farrah!*" so saying, he led in his men, and the little apartment was soon filled with the opposing forces. The grey dawn was now dimming the yellow torchlight, and it seemed as if the sun were destined to rise on as bloody a spectacle, as he had ever laid bare within the walls of cottage or castle; for the galloglass were so devoted to Sir John, that, although inferior in number to the troop of Lord Thomas, they would have made any attempt to seize their captain, the signal for onslaught; but he, standing forward, besought them to restrain their indignation. "I am," said he, "accused of treachery by Master Parez; the quarrel, for the present, is between us only: some kind fellow of my troop seek me out my sword, and when the sun is risen that quarrel shall be determined. In the meanwhile, friends, brothers in arms, obey your lawful commander: I am no longer an officer of the Irish army: I but ask protection from the violence of my enemies, till I shall have justified my anger against their treachery and falsehood: Parez, you and I met once before, but we shall not be parted this morning till one or other is past the reach of malice, and out of the need of help!"

"I ask no sweeter fortune," cried Parez; "and the sooner, on my soul, the better! There comes his dishonoured sword at last: ha! what is this? the blade is bloody; villain kern, where got you this bloody weapon?"

"It shall be redder yet!" exclaimed Talbot; "it will not be the first time I have made that good blade red in the blood of traitors: where got you the sword, Gowran MacDonogh?"

"Please your nobleness, behind the bench whereon you slept last night," replied the man.

"Oh, Heaven!" exclaimed Perez, with such vehemence, and in a tone of such horror and indignation; that all present turned their eyes upon him, as he stood pointing at the weapon all smeared from hilt to point with gore, scarce yet cold upon the iron: "Oh Heaven! red in the blood of traitors? no, murderer! but red in the blood of a Christian bishop! Oh the treachery! the hateful villainy! Yes, my lord, and you noble gentlemen, this is too plain to be mistaken: the wretch who has himself participated in the murder, is the first, having concealed the evidence of his own guilt, to become the accuser of his partners in the crime!"

"Why, ruffian, what wouldst thou say?" demanded Talbot, scarce comprehending the extent or purport of this new accusation.

"That you are yourself one of the shedders of the Archbishop's blood!" cried Perez; "your sword dripping from the slaughter, is found concealed behind your bed; your face and hands are covered with the marks of the horrid deed: you dare not touch this murdered prelate's body, it would bleed afresh, were you to lay your impious hands upon it: ah! see the piteous way in which the good old man is hacked and mangled!"

"Hateful hypocrite!" exclaimed Talbot; "you know well this is a falsehood too gross to pass: are you not afraid, Christopher Perez, in presence of one whom you may soon yourself resemble, to outrage your Maker with this devilish machination?"

"I have no such cause as you, John Talbot, to dread the vengeance of an outraged God; thank Heaven, my hands are free of holy blood." As Perez spoke, his voice was broken, and his hands were clenched, as if repressing some strong struggle within him; but, as Talbot was about to utter another indignant reply, the voice of Travers was heard among the throng.

"Hear him not!" exclaimed the churchman; "he is but adding the guilt of falsehood to the damnation of murder! I have proof that he premeditated this crime: I have proof that it is not four and twenty hours since Sir John Talbot was heard to threaten the life of Archbishop Alan."

"Ha!" cried Lord Thomas, "heard to threaten his life? This begins to look worse than, with all his ungrateful insolence, I could have supposed."

"Yes, my lord and gentlemen," continued Travers, "when the bishops of the church of God lie pierced by the daggers of assassins, it is no time to hold back the declaration of the truth: there is no bond too binding to be loosed: no seal too sacred to be broken in such a time, and in such a cause as this: my lord, I was last night besought to administer ghostly consolation to one whose conscience troubled him, for having listened to the impiety of a wretch who had vowed, in his presence, that neither sanctuary nor altar, should shield an archbishop of the church from his revenge. That wretch now stands before you, having accomplished his most hateful purpose; and the prelate, whose life he sought, lies, the victim of that impious hate, a murdered man at our feet!"

"There is no need, Master Travers," said Talbot, his anger giving way at once to the coolness of a man who finds himself suddenly beset with difficulties that demand

the exercise of all his faculties ; “ there is no need to make a merit of a disclosure, which I am myself free to avow : he whom you confessed, was a serving man, and he can tell you that my anger against Archbishop Alan was caused by an unfounded suspicion ; and that suspicion, my lord and gentlemen, could not have remained upon my mind till now, since, at the moment I rescued that ill-fated prelate from the waves—and I pray, you, Master Travers, if I meant to take his life, why did I not leave him to their mercy ? I say, that this suspicion was removed the moment I boarded the stranded vessel, and that my rash rage in the first violence of my mistaken anger, ought not to be alleged against me now : produce this serving man, and he will prove what I have said ! ”

“ That servant is not now forthcoming,” replied Travers ; “ but here is a seaman, who will tell your lordship how he heard Sir John Talbot, even in the wreck, when this error of his, which he alleges could no longer have influenced him, threaten to drive the Archbishop through the surf on shore ; nay, saw him violently despoil him of a strong box of jewels, which the same Archbishop declared to be the property of the church.”

“ I did,” said a person in the crowd ; “ and, moreover, I heard that knight call the Archbishop a caitiff and a hypocrite.”

“ I avow it all,” cried Talbot ; “ save that my threat to drive him through the surf was, like the other, prefaced with an ‘ if.’ The jewels were the property of one then present, who claimed them at his hands, and denied having bestowed them on the church : and, for the charge of naming him a caitiff, hypocrite, what else dare any man in this presence say of him, who to drive you, my lord, into what he hoped would prove the destruction of your house, did forge and circulate that first false report of

SER. III.

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the old Earl's murder ; deceived by which, we took up arms in an evil hour, as well for him as for ourselves ! My lord, I claim justice at your hands ; hear what my galloglass will say in evidence of my desire to protect this unhappy prelate from injury or violence."

"By virtue of my baptism," said Art MacConnogher, "Sir John's last words to me were, to treat him with all due observance, and, on my life, to be answerable to him for the Archbishop's safety."

"Let him touch the body if he dare !" cried Perez, impetuously breaking in. Talbot stepped forward, and raised the still bleeding body in his arms.

"Base slave !" he cried, as he did so, "I fear your charms and childish superstitions, as little as your anger !" But as he spoke, Perez started forward, and cried in a loud voice, "Look here ! my lord and gentlemen ! oh saints and martyrs look down on this !" There was a dagger still buried in the Archbishop's side : its hilt had hitherto been concealed by a fold of his night dress ; but, as Talbot raised the body, it was suddenly exposed ; and while a shudder went round the room, his eyes were blasted with the sight of his own missing weapon.

He dropped the corpse, and stood up in uncontrolled indignation—"It is false," he cried ; "some villain has stolen my arms to practise this treachery ! You, Christopher Perez, I suspect to be that doubly damned traitor and murderer ! Draw, if you have the heart of a man, draw !" Those around rushed between them, and Lord Thomas commanded Perez to refrain.

"Sir John Talbot," said he, "I would give my best battle of galloglass that this had not been so : my father loved you well, and I would his love had wrought in you a worthier return : but these evidences are too plain ; my lieutenant shall not meet a man disgraced by this mani-

fest conviction. Perez, I command you hold back—and for yourself, Sir John Talbot, remembering the good service you have done one that was dear to us all, I cannot deal with you as with another, you are free to leave my camp. From the first hour you joined this enterprise, you have been the sower of dissension : that I myself was led away by you on one occasion, was my fault, not your justification. Go ! I may be to blame in thus enlarging one whose crime has been so monstrous, for you cannot plead, as those other wretches may, a misconception of my unfortunate exclamation. No, miserable man, you did the deed out of your own malice, preconceived and premeditated."

" My Lord Thomas," said Talbot, " I no longer bear anger towards you ; the success of this villainy justifies your ill opinion : yet, before I go, I would say in the presence of God ——"

" Away with the blasphemer !" cried Travers. " My lord, you do wrong to let this wretch escape : lay hands upon him, gentlemen and Christians ; I claim his arrest in the name of the church ! "

" Nephew," said Sir Oliver Fitzgerald, who had not before taken part in the dispute, " this jack-priest must be curbed, or he will ride rough-shod over us all ! I'll tell you what, Master Travers, I doubt much whether there be not some such device as Sir John Talbot avers in this strange accusation. How should Master Perez know this dagger as his ? They have not been familiar of late, I trow."

" The dagger is not yet four-and-twenty hours in my possession," said Talbot; " I bought it of Master Harvey, in Skinners' Row, on yesterday afternoon."

" Ha ! " cried Lord Thomas, turning round on Perez : " how then, could you know the skene for his, sirrah ? "

Parez hesitated, coloured, and grew pale again; but Travers, who held the dagger in his hand, said quickly—“The hound’s head is no common crest.”

“I knew it by the Talbot’s head engraved on the hilt,” cried Parez, glancing at the weapon which his prompter presented to view; “and I knew it for Sir John Talbot’s because no galloglass’s or yeoman’s skene could be so richly mounted.”

“I protest I much mistrust you both,” said Sir Oliver.

“And I,” replied Travers, “have little hope of the cause supported by such a reviler of everything holy. My Lord Thomas, will you arrest this murderer of Archbishop Alan or not?”

“Wafer and his accomplice shall answer for what they have done,” replied the young lord: “but I have said that Sir John Talbot is at liberty to leave my camp, and I will not go back in my promise.”

“Then, my lord,” cried Travers, “I renounce your cause: treason against Holy Church never prospered, and I will not dare destruction longer with traitors of your stamp! Bring out my horse, knaves. You shall hear more of this, my lord, before you are a day older!”

“Marry, and a *benedicite* go with you, for a truculent shaveling!” cried Sir Oliver; “and if you but plague your new friends as you have your old, why by my faith, you will do us a better service with the King, than ever you did with your own natural allies.” But ere he had concluded, Travers was gone.

Talbot now stood forward—“My lord, before I go, I again claim the combat.”

“Sir John Talbot, heaven forbid that, if there was a doubt upon any man’s mind of your guilt, I should deny you the right of that appeal: but the thing is manifest; and whether or no, till this war is over, no officer of mine

shall venture his life in such a dispute. Master Perez, put up your sword; we have had over much brawling to-night; I will give you some more profitable use for your weapon. I tell you, sirrah, you are my lieutenant, and shall strike no blow in this quarrel to-day."

"Then, my lord," said Talbot, "farewell; farewell, Sir Oliver; Art-Barry Oge—farewell, my true, brave fellows! You are soon to have another captain—but if you doubt my word, and think I committed this act, my denial on oath would weigh but little."

"Noble Sir," said Art, "I would take your word for it, if there were the oaths of ten men against you!"

Talbot's eye kindled proudly: he took the son of Connogher by the hand. "Art," said he, "I thank you for that word more than for all the good service you have done under me! Farewell, Art; obey your next captain as you have obeyed me. I shall never ride at the head of a battle of galloglass again!"

"*A vic, vic deelish mo chree!*!" cried the poor fellow, the tears running down his cheeks as he spoke; "stay with us—we will do no good without you. If you go, a store—noble Sir John, if you go, I will go with you!"

"We will follow him over the ridge of the world!" exclaimed Barry Oge.

"Nephew," cried Sir Oliver, "this man is surely innocent."

"Mutiny!" shouted Perez. "My lord, these villain kern are openly deserting."

"Fall in, *mo vouchalee*," said Talbot, and the galloglass immediately drew back, and formed as he had ordered. There was not a dry eye among them. "As you love my father's son," continued he, "let no man leave his standard. I pray you every man, by the hand of his

gossip, be true to the old House that nurtured us all ! This night's disaster is my misfortune. I do not, *dar brighe an lamh shin*, I do not believe it the fault of any man of the clan Gerald ! Farewell, *oga brevara ! slan leat, slan leat huile go bragh !*" As he spoke, his men thronged around, unwilling to part from so beloved a leader. They followed him to the street, wringing his hand, and lamenting.

Parez had withdrawn at the first word he heard him address to the galloglass in Irish ; for he knew the power he could, through that medium, at any time exercise upon them ; and Lord Thomas was now mounted, and at the head of his troop. Day had dawned, and the pale light showed many a haggard countenance, but none more so than that of Parez. Talbot passed him in silence, and with a glance of as much indifference as he could command. This seemed to cut Parez to the soul, for the blood rushed to his face ; and he cried, "Sneer on ! we shall meet yet where there will be none to part us !" Talbot made no reply, but called for his horse. The galloglass still hung about him as he mounted. "Give but the word, Sir John," said Art, with his arm over the neck of his charger ; "say but the word, *astore*, and I will have my axe in the traitor's skull before he can bless himself !"

"*Dar Dhia, no !* Art Mac Connogher, must I tell you again to let me go ? Back, back ; do as I desire, and God bless you all !—*banaght leat go bragh !*" and without bestowing another look on those he left behind, he put spurs to his horse and galloped off the ground. The master-feeling in his mind was exultation. He had kept his word with Dudley ; he was clear of the rebellion ; and he felt a calm assurance that, since he knew he was so without dishonour, the imputation of Parez could never

prevail against him. On that charge, indeed, he scarce bestowed a thought, but acted over and over, in imagination, the triumph he had gained against him. "My way is now clear," he cried. "Ha, ha, by Heaven, I could scarce have wished it better! No man can blame me. I was right—by my honour, I was right throughout! Ay, if he had done me injury ten times as great, that look I gave him pays for all! How the caitiff writhed! As I am a Christian, I have had fair revenge! Ah, Ellen, you little dream this morning that we shall be on our way to Waterford, as you wished last night, before either of us is a day older. It will delight you to hear of it. Thank Heaven, that I have the good news to carry; it will be like the first burst of sunshine after a thunder storm."

By this he was at the Tolka. As he rode through, he be-thought himself of the blood upon his hands and clothes. He dismounted, and washed his person clean of the pollution; but his buff coat was so saturated, that he could not remove the stains. The thought then, for the first time, struck him, that there might be danger in showing himself. Travers was gone, no doubt, to Dublin, and would certainly repeat the accusation he had so strenuously insisted on. Innocent as he was, to be arrested with proofs of guilt so strong against him—nay, in his present circumstance, to be apprehended at all—was not to be thought of without anxiety. Yet into Dublin he must go; a few hours would make Ellen his wife; they might then depart together, and be out of the reach of pursuit before another day had passed. But to leave the country with this stain upon his name—that pang thrilled his breast as sharply as the first. Well, he was at least conscious of his own innocence, and Ellen would believe him: what more could an outlawed man expect? But he must make sure; he must not run the risk of being taken;

his clothes must be changed ; the bearded upper lip must be made bare ; and the long dark curls, that played upon his shoulder, must be thinned and shortened. Seeing the necessity he lost no time in making preparations to comply with it. He rode to the house of one in whom he could confide, announced his purpose, and dispatched a messenger to the city for such habilments as he thought most suitable to the character he meant to assume—that of a native gentleman of some account.

The messenger delayed—the hour appointed for the ceremony was approaching—arrived—elapsed—and he could not go out of the doors, his entertainer with friendly violence resisting his attempts to run all hazards, and urging on him every reasonable ground why he should rather wait till he might go in safety, than expose his bride to a calamity so much more serious than an hour's disappointment. The dress at last was procured, and Talbot left the house so altered that he hardly knew his own shadow on the wall. His trousers of grey plaid, tight to the leg, were strapped under light brogues of unstained leather : his coat, of the fine frieze of Waterford was buttoned to the throat ; the standing collar closely fitting at the neck, while the full skirts descended from a broad belt round the waist, in plaited folds barely reaching to mid thigh. Over this was cast his mantle, dark brown, short, and of the Spanish cut, with fringed edges and a warm collar of silk thrums. His hat alone was English, for, to have appeared in the blue barrad of the country, after cutting off crommeal and coolun, would, in Dublin, have excited the animadversion of the citizens. Thus equipped, Sir John Talbot, with rapid steps, sought the city gates : the English furniture of his horse had prevented him from riding. He posted up from the bridge, unmindful of the approving glances of many a

Saxon burgher's daughter, admiring the tall Irishman ; hurried past Christ Church and down Nicholas-street, shouldering aside the throng of the market with the step of a man well accustomed to have way made for him—“ Way there, you knave,” cried he to one fellow, blocking up the narrow passage with his cart.

“ God's mercy, Teague ! ” replied the man of English blood with a stare, but took no further notice.

“ Out of my way, rascal ! ” cried Talbot seizing him by the collar, and flinging him to one side : the fellow, who fell among the dealers' baskets, rose cursing furiously, but he had no wish to try the strength of the audacious native's arm a second time.

“ Ay, ay,” he exclaimed, “ things are coming to a pretty pass, when wild wood-kern walk the streets of Dublin like born English gentlemen ! ”

“ He is mere Irish,” said another ; “ stick your knife into him, Peter—what about the thirty shillings ? —we'll club for the fine, if it be ever levied.”

“ Irish as he is,” replied Peter, “ I would not take his life by subscription ! ”

“ By my faith, and it is well you did not take me at my offer, Peter ; for now that I look again, he is a conformed Irishman ; he has neither glibb nor hair upon his lip :—Egad, it were as well not meddle with him : 'tis five pound if it be a penny in such a fellow's case.”

“ He is main strong in the arm,” said Peter, “ be his life worth what it may.”

Meanwhile Talbot was at Nicholas-gate ; another minute placed him at the door of Dame Keating's house “ Hah ! have I kept them waiting ? ” he cried, as he entered the hall ; but the servant looked at him in mute astonishment. “ Why, Lysagh,” cried Talbot, “ do you not know me when I come to you as one of your own countrymen ? ”

"Is this you, Sir John? may I never see glory if I did not think it was one of *Tomás-an-Teedá's* Irish captains from beyond the pale—a Tierna Mor, at the least."

"Well, Lysagh, it is as you see: be silent, Lysagh; I have reasons to make me wish to pass with the crowd as that which you suppose; but lead me to the gentlewoman quick—is father Thomas here?"

"Ah, Sir John, you will have to go to the cathedral now: I never thought you would have been so slack upon the morning that they say is in it. But here is a billet left for you by Dame Margaret; that will tell your nobleness why they have gone before." Talbot snatched the letter, and, with a sudden tumult at his heart that made the writing swim for a moment in his eyes, read as follows:—

"DEAR KINSMAN—We waited for you till long after the hour appointed: the father Thomas, having to assist at high mass in Saint Patrick's, takes us thither with him, as well for the performance of our worship, as to afford you, if you should come during our absence, an opportunity of still accomplishing your desires to-day; for, after mass, he will remain in expectation of your coming, for an hour, in the little chapel between the sixth and seventh pillars of the nave, upon the left hand as one enters. Should you not come within that time we will return to the Gate; but father Thomas, being noticed to attend some after ceremonial, cannot accompany us; so, if you come not, you must wait till the morrow; so, dear kinsman, if you do come before the hour after mass has passed, you will find her that you wot of there, as I have told you, along with

"Your loving kinswoman,

"M. K."

Talbot had scarce read the whole till he was on his way to the cathedral. The sun was shing brightly on the huge tower, and making all the flying buttresses stand out like bars of silver from the dusk bulk of the building. Fair as the scene was to a man leaving Nicholas-gate, with the open field before him, and the great cathedral in the midst, with all its battlements and pinnacles tipped with the sunbeams and glittering against the blue sky, Talbot bestowed scarce a look upon its beauties, but hurried round to the great western doorway, and entered the cathedral, panting from his haste, and half forgetful of the accustomed observances of his religion.

"Are you a heathen, master kern," said one standing near the door, "that you touch not the holy-water and enter the house of God with neither cross nor blessing?"

Talbot dipped his fingers in the stone font that projected from the jamb of the great doorway, and reverently crossed himself. "I came on such an errand," he answered, "as might well make a man forget to bless himself." The citizen, astonished at his good English, and thinking that he came from some dying person for a priest, made way, and Talbot turning into the side aisle, passed up to father Keating's confessional through the skirts of the kneeling crowd, that filled either transept and extended half way down the nave, for it was solemn high-mass, and the citizens, delighted to get outside their walls, had flocked to St. Patrick's that morning in unwonted numbers. The choir was lighted up, and through the open arches of the screen and prebendary stalls could be seen crowded with knights and ladies kneeling between the double rows of white surpliced singers! the pale lamp light contended in vain with the broad glare of day about the nearer end; but towards the altar, where none else was admitted, its yellow radiance, made all the half-seen

pillars and carved work of the hanging galleries shine with an indistinct lustre like dimmed gold.

Father Keating's confessional was an ancient and grotesque wooden chapel, built against one of the great pillars of the aisle, with its little precinct railed in, and a lamp burning before an image of the Virgin, over its entrance. Talbot found it closed; but to have gone to search for his kinswoman among the multitude in the choir, would have been both unbecoming, and in all probability fruitless: he knelt down, therefore, with his arms resting on the low rail, and awaited the conclusion of the service in fluttering and anxious expectation.

The Knight could not bend his mind to devotion; he had twice been on the point of happiness, and she whom he loved had twice been snatched almost from his arms, by sudden calamity:—What if this should be the third time—Ellen might have been offended with him for not keeping his appointment—the chancellor might be there and claim her as his ward—there was no peace for his soul till she was his beyond the power of man to forbid the banns; and yet he could not listen to the solemn music, and see the people around bent in adoration, without reproaching himself that one whose happiness so much depended on a rite of the church, could listen to the sounds of that church's most essential sacrifice thus unmoved by livelier feelings of devotion. He heard the little bells tinkling with their tongues of silver; he could hardly feel as if in presence of the Host; he heard the blessing, and saw the people bending to receive it, but could scarcely feel that he participated in the benediction.

At length mass was over, and the people rose, but those within the nave remained, as well as many who had knelt near the screen, and could have heard the service; they appeared to await a further ceremony, Talbot knew not

what; but he could perceive that there was some important preparation going on among the clergy, who passed and repassed from the side doors to St. Mary's chapel, their vestments glittering dazzlingly as they came out into the sunshine of the aisle. He was gazing up the long bright vista, as the dean himself withdrew, his robes shining like flashes of fire as he crossed each bar of the sunshine lying across the narrow passage from every window, when, with a joyful start, he found those whom he sought by his side.

"Dear kinswoman," he cried, extending his hand to Dame Keating; "and you, my Ellen, will rejoice to know that my promise to you is fulfilled. I am no longer engaged in the enterprise of Lord Thomas and his friends. I am now a free man, and can take you where you will. I have left them without dishonour, although I would that we had parted better friends. But come, my love, you must lean now upon me. Dear father, take to your blessed work, for I feel like a suppliant at heaven's gate till the words are said which will make my beloved Ellen my own true wife."

"Come in then, my children; I have little time to lose." replied father Keating, leading them into his little oratory, which was scarcely more than sufficient to give them all room; "I have," said he, "some further duties to attend to to-day; something has happened, I know not what, but I shall have to take a part; the Dean signed as much to me as he was going out; so kneel down, my children, for I must tie this knot with what speed I may." The ceremony was performed, and Talbot and Ellen arose, man and wife.

"Now, sister," said father Thomas, as he kissed Dame Keating's cheek, after saluting the bride, "will you return to Nicholas-gate, or wait for me? I may perhaps be able

to accompany you home yet, if you will but wait the conclusion of the service, which cannot now be long : I can give you places under the Dean's gallery in my own stall, if you will wait for me." They all assented gladly, and he led them into the choir. Ellen leaning on his arm, Talbot passed through the crowd with steps that hardly seemed to touch the ground : his fears had vanished, and he well believed himself the happiest man that day within the walls of the church. His heart no longer resisted the influence of the scene, nay, he felt himself penetrated with unwonted feelings of devotion, and could have knelt down and thanked heaven with a breast full of gratitude and humbleness. There was something awe-inspiring too, in the transition from broad day light to the dim splendour of the choir, with its lofty clustered pillars, its rich carved stalls and galleries, and the pomp of its high altar and attendant ministers ; then the soft light threw over all a golden radiance, and the contrast between the glare, without, and the hazy but lustrous obscurity within, made the very place seem holier, and prepared the mind for thoughts as much set apart and dedicated as was the scene itself.

There was a hum of conversation as the people awaited the communication which it had been intimated would be made to them from the altar, but Talbot did not utter more than a whisper or two ; he was too full of joy to speak ; but he often pressed the arm that was within his own, as if he dreaded its withdrawal, or arranged her mantle closer over his bride's shoulders, lest the cold air from the aisle should incommod her. Dame Keating looked on with a placid smile, and once or twice tears came to her eyes when they rested on the happy pair. Her attention was soon claimed by her brother, who with other ecclesiastics entered in their vestments from the

little door near the altar ; it was at such a distance she could not see his face distinctly, but she thought he looked agitated. And now the clergy ranged themselves on either side of the chancel, and boys came in and delivered a lighted taper to each : when this was done, a whisper ran through the church, that some one was about to be excommunicated.

" Let us come away, Ellen," said Talbot, " we have had our blessing, it would but distress you to listen to their curse."

" Dear John, we cannot leave Dame Margaret, she waits for her brother ; see how anxious she is to hear what they say," replied Ellen ; " hush, the Dean is speaking." As she whispered, the bell tinkled again ; the congregation knelt, the whole eastern end of the choir with all the preparations at the altar, were clearly visible. In the centre stood the Dean, a lighted taper in his hand, on right and left his assistant clergy formed two lines extending on either hand to the side doors ; all was silent as the grave.

" My Christian friends," the Dean began, " I have heavy news to impart to you ; news which may make every Christian congregation that hears it, shudder. It is known to you all, how this kingdom is the prey of civil rage, avowed rebels openly resisting the authority of the law, and spilling the blood of the King's subjects and servants, without dread or pity. We have seen this violence and bloodshed with constant grief of spirit, praying to God daily that He would have pity on His people, and remove this fury from their hearts, but it has pleased Him rather to multiply His inflictions upon this sinful nation. Their crimes have long cried for punishment, until men thought the wrath of God was not to be moved by sinning. But now in His fit season He visits them with a double vengeance. Although we have fallen on these troubled times,

we watch and pray like faithful shepherds, not using or putting forth the strong power of the church rashly or against all offenders; for God may in His anger against the nation, give the bodies of His people, for a warning, to the sword, yet will He not surely destroy their souls without great cause, nor cast them forth utterly from the flock of Christ. But the enemy of mankind, who is ever seeking the destruction of souls, has this day instigated some children of Belial to a deed the most heinous and abominable that has ever stained the earth since the times of the martyrs. Violent hands have been laid upon a minister of God"—there was a shudder among the congregation, and Talbot's heart began to beat fearfully fast as the Dean proceeded—"the blood of a Christian bishop has been spilled, the life of the Archbishop of Dublin has been taken!"—Many of the woman present uttered cries of horror; Dame Keating clasped her hands and shrieked, and Ellen leaned suddenly on Talbot's shoulder, but did not speak.

"Come away," he whispered, "you ought not to hear this. Ellen, dearest, you are faint: shall I bear you into the air?"

"Oh, no, no—it was the thought of your threats against the Archbishop—I tremble to think of them. You will now never be able to have his forgiveness."

"Ellen!" said Talbot, with an earnestness that made her start, "whatever you hear, have trust in me. They have charged me—but no matter—Ellen, I wish you would come away"—but before he could urge her further, the Dean was proceeding to relate the circumstances of the murder.

"And now," he continued, "the said traitor coming to Artane, where the Archbishop lay, commanded two of his squires, Nicholas Wafer and John Teling, to bring forth

his prisoner : they, dragging the Archbishop from his bed, brought him before the imperious rebel, who, not being able to abide the sight of such a dishonour done an aged man, and a Christian bishop, did utter some such words as these, ‘take the clown away,’ which they, wilfully misinterpreting—for he spoke in the Irish tongue—did then and there with their knives hack the said Archbishop in pieces.”

Cries of horror and execration arose from every part of the church : Talbot’s breath came more freely, for he had half expected to hear his own name coupled with those of the murderers, and was debating whether to stand up and openly deny the charge, or to lift Ellen in his arms, and bear her out of hearing ; but he thought the danger was over, and listened to hear the merited curses of the two who had been named ; but the Dean continued—“ Now then, the impious butchery being completed, the said traitor, John Talbot”—Talbot put his arm round his bride’s waist, and drew her close to him ; he could feel her heart beating fast as she knelt, and his own was again at his throat ; he breathed hard and listened—“ the said traitor, in whose chamber the aforesaid Archbishop lay, and who already had been heard to threaten his life three several times, is found beside the bleeding body with his dagger buried in the murdered prelate’s breast, and his sword all bloody from the hateful slaughter, is, presently discovered concealed beneath his bed.” Dame Keating screamed aloud, and fell forward in a swoon ; Talbot started up to lift her from the ground, and Ellen strove to rise from her knees, but she could not : “ Ellen, I am innocent ! ” he exclaimed, “ I am cruelly wronged. As I hope to see the brightness of heaven, I never harmed a hair of the Archbishop’s head ! ”

“ Thank God,” she cried, faintly : “ yet these threats, these threats ! Oh, say again that you are innocent.”

SER. III.

G

"Upon my honour, I am guiltless."

"Oh, my God, they will excommunicate you!"

"They dare not do so. If they do, by the bright heaven, I will not endure it! Here, Ellen, love, take this poor lady's head upon your lap, and do not let your heart fail you, for I will see this out. They dare not excommunicate an innocent man!" He stood up, gazing boldly on the Dean and his assistants, neither blanching under the withering look of Keating, whose eyes were fixed on him throughout, nor shrinking even from the sight of Travers, whom he recognised in the background, prompting his condemnation. It was well for Talbot that the spot where he stood was somewhat retired from the body of the choir, and amply curtained; for, save father Thomas, none else seemed to remark his conduct; and he, either through consideration to his sister, or compassion for the young bride, seemed inclined to give him an opportunity of escape, for he did not point him out to any of the rest, but only cast towards him frequent glances of abhorrence and indignation.

The bells tinkled again, and the people kept silence; the Dean advanced a step, and raised the taper in one hand, while he spread the other on the open Bible on the reading-desk. "By the authority of God, the Father Almighty," he began, and suddenly Talbot felt a cold shudder get the better of his angry determination, as the priest repeated the names of each person of the Trinity, and continued, "of the blessed Virgin Mary, and of the blessed Patrick, and of all the angels, archangels, saints, martyrs, and confessors, we excommunicate the said John Teling, Nicholas Wafer, and John Talbot, and we anathematise them!" He closed the book as he spoke, and the bells again sounded.

Talbot's knees knocked together, and the light left

his eyes, but he grasped a pillar of the canopy, and supported himself. The Dean then threw down his taper, and all the clergy cast their eyes upon the ground : thin columns of smoke, white and foetid, rose curling from the half-extinguished wicks, as they smouldered on the damp stone floor. “Amen!” responded the clergy on either hand and the chanters from the choir, and the sound of the bell, again went to Talbot’s heart like ice. But Ellen had now risen and had taken his hand in her’s : Dame Keating was groaning and weeping. The touch of his bride’s warm fingers thrilled though the unfortunate knight with something of a reviving power, and he drew her again close to his side. “It is hard to bear,” he whispered ; “but I know in my own breast that they wrong me foully.”

“The trial is not so great,” she murmured : “I can bear this, and worse, for your sake.”

“Bless you, my own sweet wife !” he cried, and clasped her closer, while the whole scene swam in the misty suffusion of his eyes, and his heart grew full.

“I must break off,” said Turlogh, “else I should not have done to-night. To-morrow I will continue the story.”

TENTH NIGHT.

“WELL, Turlogh,” said Henry, when they were all assembled next night, “what new troubles have you in store for this unfortunate hero of yours ? Had I been he, I should have cut my throat long ago.”

“I should have been much more apt to have done that service for some of my friends !” cried Art : “Talbot has some one worth living for now : Ellen Dudley is doing

just as I should expect from old Paul's daughter. I would live on for her sake, though I was cursed worse than Job!"

"And so," said Henry, "you have forgotten his desertion of the cause, already."

"By my hand, and so I had," replied Art; "but how could I think of that, when he was so ill used from the first?—besides, I said that if he turned loyalist again, I would not forgive him: he is not *Sassenagh* yet, thank his good stars for that; for he has turned out just the sort of man that I would fain be friends with: I wish, though, he had shown a little more respect to his clergy—to tell you the truth, I am afraid Sir John is hardly as good a Catholic as he ought to be."

"I should not wonder if he turned heretic," said Henry.

"If he do," said Art, "may evory one of the Dean's curses be fulfilled upon him! What could put such a wicked thought into your head, Henry?"

"By my faith," replied Henry, "if I found a priest of my church divulging what had been told him *sub sigillo*—"

"Noble Henry," interrupted Turlogh, "judge not of Travers so hastily: we shall hear more of that anon."

"Well," continued Henry, "whether Travers broke his vows or not, if I found that the church had made so great a mistake as to excommunicate me, when I was innocent of the charge, I should begin to look into her infallibility somewhat sharply."

"*Dar Kiaran*, what heretical impertinencies are these?" exclaimed Art: "don't you know that it is only to a general council of the church infallibility is to be accorded: a simple dean may make a mistake as well as a layman; but a Council of Bishops and Cardinals, with the Holy

Father at their head would have handled Master Travers and his charge after another fashion!"

"Perhaps so," replied Henry; "but suppose they had not—what then?"

"I will suppose no such thing," cried Art, "for it is impossible! Besides, in what way would he be better off if he did turn heretic?—do not the Queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury claim to fulminate as infallibly from Westminster, as Clement and his Cardinals from the Vatican?"

"Ay," exclaimed Red Hugh, "show me the scurvy sect that sets not up for equal authority with the best of us! there are those scum of Scots: the fanatic knaves thunder me as truculently from Saint Mungo's, as if Mess John were direct successor to Saint Peter!"

"Let them rave," said Henry; "but still it may be as well for Talbot in the end, that he has the reformation so near at hand: his marriage, I have a shrewd guess, is not worth a straw now, and unless he turn Protestant, I do not see that he has any chance of getting the ceremony confirmed."

"How it may affect his marriage, I cannot tell," said Hugh, "but this I know, that the man who would apostatize, for the mere sake of authenticating his marriage, would be ill worthy of such a wife: if Talbot agree with the heresy when it comes, let him join it, in the name of reason and justice: he is not as we are, Irish by blood, and has not, as we have, unanswerable reasons for adhering to the Mother Church through good and ill, both in opinion and report."

"Why," said Henry, "what unanswerable reason have I for adhering to the Church of Rome, if I more approve the doctrine of the heretics?"

"This," replied Hugh; "that you are Irish; and that

the church is now the only common tie of Irishmen : think what we should be without her, when even now, bound as we are by common faith, the English can, with over much truth, boast that if you put one Irishman upon the spit, you need never want for another to roast him."

"Oh, but you view the matter as a mere politician, O'Donnell," replied Henry ; "I speak of it as a man of candid conscience, anxious after the truth."

"If it be necessary to the preservation of my nation," cried Hugh, "that we should remain attached to the Mother Church, I care not, though I thought her fallible as heresy itself, I would never sacrifice my country to my private judgment ! "

"And I," replied Henry, "rather than profess one error, knowing it to be such, wculd Saxonize myself to-morrow ; ay, and should submit to be known by the name of Smith or Styles, or any other barbarous appellation ! "

"Well, kinsmen," said Art, "every man in his humour : thank my good stars, I have no occasion to speculate on what I might do in such a case ; but in the meantime, Turlogh, I think, cannot consider himself too highly complimented by the discussion."

"By the crowning stone of Kilmacrenan," cried Turlogh, "I take it as the best praise your noblenesses can accord to me, that you should show such interest in the hero of my poor tale. Whether Sir John is destined to join the English heresy or no, I shall not forestall myself by telling ; but since he has not incurred so much disapprobation as I dreaded, for abandoning the quarrel of Lord Thomas, I have little fear now but that I shall keep up your approving interest in him to the end."

"Proceed then, Turlogh Buy," said Hugh ; "I would fain have a good opinion of him, if I could."

"If you make that scoundrel, Perez, anything else than a thorough villain throughout," said Art, "I shall have a quarrel with you, Turlogh."

"Ah, noble son of Shane," replied the bard, "if I had had a voice in the story, I should have made many things different; but telling you the tale of another man, I must abide by that which I have heard myself;"—and so he proceeded with his narrative.

THE REBELLION OF SILKEN THOMAS.

PART THIRD.

FOR a full minute after the fulmination of the curse, Sir John Talbot stood in motionless dismay; the bells knelling in his brain, and the people's footsteps, as they swept past him, sounding in his ears like the noise of flowing waters. He felt as if the ground on which he stood was moving with the moving multitude; every eye seemed turned upon him, and every hand outstretched for his destruction. Alas, there were no eyes bent on him save those of his unhappy bride; no hands, save her's about him; for his miserable kinswoman had fled the stall in horror, and her brother was also withdrawn from the band of ecclesiastics in the chancel. Ellen, however, was still by his side, still clasping his hands, and still gazing on him with looks, amid all their anguish, of confidence and affection. But as her eyes dwelt on his countenance, it was for a moment so ghastly and despairing, that the dreadful thought—that he was guilty—came upon her heart like the stroke of death: she sickened, and tottered back, pale as ashes. The hands of the wretched knight fell like lead when they lost their support in her's, but the sudden motion of their withdrawal started him from his trance: he drew a hard breath—almost a sob—raised his

hand hurriedly to his forehead, and looked around. His first impulse was to put his arm again round his bride's waist, and he did so with all the quickness of affectionate care; the suspicion on her mind had never occurred to him; his looks were those of an indignant but awfully dismayed man. "I am innocent! I will not endure it!" he cried. "What a scene, Ellen dear, to bring you to!"

This reiterated assertion of his innocence came like new life to his fainting bride, yet she still gasped from the agony of her first fearful apprehension, as she faintly articulated, "I can bear it—I could have borne it all, but, when I saw you look so, I had a horrible thought—John, dearest, I think so no longer!"

"Ellen, love," he exclaimed, "if you doubt me, I am lost for ever! I am guiltless! I would have told you all, if I had had but one minute's opportunity before our marriage; but this came upon me so suddenly, that my very heart is crushed by the unexpected blow. Ah! I have scorned the church too much; I have been a fearful reviler of holy men!"

"Keep up your heart, love," she replied, "God is merciful: prayer and penance may yet appease the church. I will fast with you—I will pray with you. Oh, I could kneel down and thank Heaven that it is no worse!"

"Bad enough, Ellen—bad enough!" he answered bitterly; "but I do thank Heaven that has given me such a comforter:—yet, blessed Virgin! what could this innocent girl have done to make her partner in such a punishment?"

"I can bear it—I can bear it all," said Ellen: "the burthen of it all is light, compared with a moment such as wrung my heart before you spoke to me."

"Bless you, my good angel; bless you!—but, Ellen

love, you little know what you have to bear we must prepare for the worst—they will come presently to arrest me."

"Dearest, no! Your dress disguises you; if your kinsman be but true to you, we are safe still."

"Noble girl! you make me ashamed of my faint-heartedness. I am an innocent man, and by the bright heaven, I will not endure it! I will go to the primate; I will make my appeal to Cromer himself!"

There was a sudden tenderness in Ellen's voice, and her cheek kindled again as she replied—"Dear John, I would rather hear that word than the sweetest vow you ever made me! Yes, even to the foot of Saint Peter's chair I will go with you on that holy errand! Come, love: the world is all before us, and I will walk the world for your sake, and by your side, happy that I am your wife, and ready to share your fortunes." She drew her mantle round her as she spoke, and Talbot, his heart too full for a word of answer, though the pressure of his hand told well how warmly his soul responded, led her with a firm, nay, almost an elate step, to the door. Just in the narrow passage, father Keating met them, face to face: Dame Margaret was with him, pale and shuddering.

"Wretched man," cried the ecclesiastic, "dost thou still pollute the house of God with thy accursed presence?"

"Master Keating," said Talbot, firmly, "God's house cannot receive pollution from the presence of an innocent man. I never harmed a hair of Archbishop Alan's head! I tell you, father Thomas, and by the staff of the blessed Patrick, I swear to you——"

"Blaspheme not, blaspheme not!" exclaimed Keating, "I am myself doing a grievous sin in yielding to the solicitations of my sister; and conniving at the escape of such a wretch."

"I seek no escape!" cried the knight; "I am an innocent man, and I claim the trial, by combat—by ordeal—I care not what: my trust is firm in the God of justice!"

"Alas," replied Keating, "what idle words are these? Thou art now wrapped in the bonds of excommunication; thy soul is this day sunk in perdition for ever!"

"Master Keating," said Talbot solemnly, and not without a shudder; "I dare not tell you a falsehood under this roof: I would I could show you my heart; you would there find sorrow enough for many a fault, and many a sinful folly, but, to the core it is clear of malice towards the murdered man: look at these hands—may the palsy strike them if they have shed one drop of his blood! Master Keating, I am guiltless of Archbishop Alan's murder, so help me God, and the blessed Patrick!"

"Oh aid us," cried Ellen. "Help us, reverend father; we are willing to submit to the church's judgment: there is no penance too hard:—dear father, aid us, and your soul shall never want the prayers of two grateful beings who have none else on earth to look to for justice and protection, but yourself and this kind lady. Ah, madam, you are our kinswoman; you can influence your brother—aid us with him a little further—all we ask is to procure a safe appeal to the Primate."

"Alas, unhappy young gentlewoman," said father Keating, before his sister, who was now weeping bitterly, could make any reply, "you have forgotten, you have miserably forgotten yourself: from my soul I pity you, and fervently I pray the Mother of the afflicted to sustain you; but, alas, alas, my child, you have now no part in this wretched man—you are not his wife!"

"What mean you, Sir," said Ellen, with flashing eyes and face and bosom of crimson; "the words that made me so are scarce yet cold upon your own lips."

"Who dares to say that this lady is not my wife?" demanded Talbot in the same breath, but in a tone of fierce impatience, contrasting strongly with Ellen's low but indignant expostulation.

"May God pity you both!" cried the churchman, the tears, in spite of all his efforts, rising to his eyes—"when I joined your hands this morning, I never thought to have to tell you such a tale: but I must not conceal the truth from either of you: unhappy man, would to Heaven I could believe you innocent!"

"I am innocent! what of my wife, Sir?" demanded Talbot fiercely.

"Miserable man," replied Keating, kindling at his questioner's warmth, "she is no wife of thine! the sentence that has wrapped thy soul in the bonds of excommunication, has loosed all others—thy marriage is void!"

"I tell you, churl priest," interrupted Talbot, "this lady is my wife, and I defy the powers of hell to take her from me! Our marriage is not void! it is your condemnation of an innocent man that is void and ineffectual! Ellen, my bride, my own beloved wife, come with me; you are mine now in the eyes of God—you are mine, Ellen, and I am yours till death parts us!"

"Daughter," said the churchman, "this is the voice of the tempter! if you listen, you are lost! I tell you plainly, your marriage is annulled."

"Oh, my child," exclaimed Dame Keating, taking Ellen earnestly and affectionately by the hand that was disengaged, "it breaks my heart to have to urge you to separate yourself from my own kinsman; but think of the disgrace you would bring upon your father's name. I knew him well, and, though Sir John Talbot be related as he is to me, I would not see an honest man's daughter bring shame upon the sod that is not yet green above

his grave. Come with me, my poor child: you shall be cared for as if you were my own—why, gracious Heaven, he is excommunicated, and it is a mortal sin to touch him!"

"Would you make yourself bone and bone with one who is damned in every joint of his body?" cried the churchman.

"The curse would be upon your children," exclaimed Dame Margaret: "No priest would give them baptism!"

"Kinswoman," said Talbot, "I little looked for this at your hands. Ellen! if you believe me to be guilty of that murder: if you doubt my oath and honour——"

The unhappy girl, whose eyes had been fixed upon the ground, while grief and shame contended with indignant pride in her bosom, looked up with a piteous smile as he spoke, and, withdrawing her hand from the trembling grasp of Dame Keating, placed it in his: "Let us go," she said, and her eye kindled, and the colour mounted on her cheek as she looked round with meek resolution; "if my father were living he would approve of my act: he never doubted your word, and, with his blessing, we will go together."

The kindly churchman was touched by her devoted constancy—"Go in peace, then, poor daughter of affliction!" he said, as they departed, while his sister, again bursting into tears, sobbed aloud.

Talbot's heart was too full to speak; he led forth his bride in silence. Their eyes were dazzled with the broad daylight of the nave, and they walked forward scarce knowing whither they went. Many of the people had not yet left the church, and all down the long aisles were groups and single figures standing or walking to and fro, while round the main western doorway a crowd was still feeding the stream that poured out on the open green, or

lingered round the porch and in the shadow of the great tower, busied with speculations on the dreadful event they had been told of from the altar. Ellen had hitherto suppressed her tears; but now, in the sudden glare, and exposed to the eyes of such a multitude—for her imagination crowded the whole nave of the church with censorious and inquisitive faces—her sight failed her; she could just see a broad field of many coloured light shining in the hazy air before her, and knew that it was the great stained window over the doorway. She could not endure the thought of passing through the crowd. “Come this way, love,” she said in a low voice, and drew her supporter gently to the left. Talbot turned with a confused sense of shame and gratulation, and led his bride almost mechanically towards the more private passage through the chapter-house. He was still breathless from the excitement of his anger against Keating, still quivering with the mingled rage and terror that had taken possession of him on hearing himself denounced so horribly by the Dean; but there was joy in his heart, sweet and sustaining through it all. He had loved Ellen for years; even before she had given him proof of devoted attachment in every difficulty they had to encounter, yet he had never loved her half so well as he did now, and was amazed to think that his heart had room for such increased attachment. He had seen her a favourite child, under the tender and unremitting care of a fond father, with every difficulty smoothed for her, every trial that could be turned from her path averted: but to-day, when he quailed, she had stood fearlessly by his side; she had, by her unaided magnanimity, sustained him when he was despairing; she was now going to dare the worst that woman can endure for his sake; and neither his dread of the misery, nor his horror of the contumely that he knew awaited them, could

stifle the joy of his heart, to know that the love of such a woman was his own.

Such were the feelings that filled his breast as he passed on to the low doorway from whence he and his young wife were to issue on the journey of life, together. Through the open door he could see the green fields, fresh and sunny, with their blue aerial boundary of distant mountain: he could even hear the songs of birds among the bushes; but his heart had no sympathy for the smiling face of nature, and he could have felt himself at that moment in a fitter home in the gloomiest corner of the cloister. With these mournful imaginations gathering darkly over the one spark of pride still living in his heart he led Ellen forth in silence, when turning, he found Dame Keating by his side. Her face too plainly betokened the sorrow and commiseration that were already prevailing at her heart. "May God pardon me," she whispered, "if I have touched the wretch they say you are. I cannot keep the jewels of this unfortunate young creature," she added, as she put the strong box, which for safety she had brought with her, into the passive hands of her kinsman. "Be kind to her, dear cousin—sweet Father of Heaven, pardon me that I should say so! But be kind to her, kinsman; for, bad as they say your are, you are still my kinsman, though to my shame and bitter sorrow be it spoken: but be kind to her, John Talbot; she has borne more for your sake this day than ever woman did for man before."

"Oh, come away," said Ellen, faintly; "give me air; I cannot bear this much longer."

Talbot would have bestowed some farewell on his kinswoman; but, without waiting for a word of reply, Dame Keating had turned away as if afraid of being detected near him. The consciousness that he was shunned as an

infected being now came upon him bitterly and poignantly; but he subdued the rising of his heart, and drawing his bride's arm closer under his own led her with anxious haste into the open air.

This seemed to revive her, for her step for a moment assumed new firmness as she drew him with an earnest pressure of his arm towards the green hedgerow that separated the precincts of the cathedral on that side from the open country: but she uttered not a word; and ere they had gained the meadow to which she had strove to urge her hurrying footsteps, he felt her arm tremble, although she tottered on until they had gained the other side of the enclosure—then overcome by her emotion, she sank into his embrace, pale as if the hand of death had been upon her. And now, in proportion as her constancy throughout the trial they had passed had been more enduring and heroic than his, so was her prostration more complete and permanent. She lay, cold and motionless, as though she were never to draw the breath of life again. He bent over her for a while in speechless agony; yet, now that she lay helpless and insensible before him, he could make no exertion, think of no means to revive her or to help her. It seemed to him that the curse was beginning to be fulfilled; he sprang up, with an exclamation of terrified fondness, raised her like an infant in his arms, and ran with her to the bank of the stream; there, with tremulously eager hands, he bathed her brow, and loosened the simple girdle that encircled her waist, praying to the saints, and calling on her by turns, while he kissed her pale lips and cheeks, or held her hands in his, as if life could not depart while he retained possession of them. At last the long-drawn sigh came, and her eyes opened on the blue heavens above them. She looked around her, and again sighing heavily, attempted to sit

up; but her strength failed, and she sank back on her bridegroom's breast. He clasped her to his bosom with a tender incoherence of passionate fondness, nor did she raise her head from its place until tears had come to her relief. When her heart was again calm, poor Ellen rose, and Talbot, with his arm encircling her waist, stood up to depart with her. Both hesitated—for neither had a home to go to. They saw their conscious desolateness in one another's eyes, and both, without a word, sat down again, tacitly agreeing to consult over their unformed plans and melancholy prospects. Ellen was the first to open their little council, and, God bless the gentle heart of woman! her wan lips wore a faint smile, and her eyes were filled with the light of tenderness and affectionate reliance as she spoke.

"Wherever we go, dear John," she said, as she softly placed her hand in his, "we shall be united in heart, and with a satisfied heart all places will be alike to me."

"And to me, sweet heart!" he replied fondly; "Had we never known misfortune, we could not have realized how dear we are to one another. Now, with your hand here, in mine, I can endure 'with fortitude all that we have suffered and may yet be called on to endure.'

They were silent again for a little while, forgetting in a thrilling succession of sweet emotions, that they had sat down to talk of any thing but their mutual affection. "It is strange," said Ellen, after a pause of some moments, "it is strange how light and reconciled I now feel. I think there is surely some good fortune before us; for although the sight of the green fields always makes me cheerful, yet when I think how changed everything is since I last walked in these meadows, I feel that it cannot be their influence that lightens my heart so much. What would you think, love, if they were to send to tell you

that some sudden chance had revealed the truth of all this dreadful business, and that you were clear of any charge connected with it?"

"Ah Ellen!" and he paused and sighed—"I wish I could bear this with your gentle cheerfulness; and I will bear it, love, as meekly as I may, for your sake. But, alas! there is little hope of justice for me now, unless He who knows my heart, and sees how clear of that guilt it is, will lend me higher aid than human friends—if friends I have on earth—could ever give me." At the mention of their great Father's name, both looked up together into the blue depths of the sky; and though their lips moved not, the prayer of two innocent hearts ascended, pure and acceptable, to the throne of mercy.

Talbot rose with his bride's hand in his. "Come away, sweetheart," he said, "I know now where we shall go." She rose without a word of question, and they walked back hand-in-hand towards the cathedral.

"I am going to the Primate, Ellen," said Talbot, as they turned their steps towards the city walls; "it is the course you approved of at first, and it is the right one."

"It is the right course," she replied, with a voice of glad assent; "it is the thought that was in my own heart. I am glad of this; I am thankful to Heaven; for indeed," and she lowered her voice to a tone of greater earnestness, "I think this counsel was given us from above."

Talbot was silent for a moment, and then replied, "Ellen, I believe this myself; if I had not felt that it was so, I should never have come away as I did, without consulting you."

"Ah, dear John," replied the gentle and modest girl, "you are now my husband, and I am well content to be guided by you; and since we go on a common impulse,

SER. III.

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as I trust we ever shall, come on; I am not wearied; where does the Primate lodge?"

"I fear, Ellen, we must make a long journey to seek him. I heard yesterday that he had gone to the north."

"Well, love, we will follow him—it is not so far to Armagh."

"Bless you, dearest! But we shall not have so far to go; it is but five miles beyond Drogheda; he is at Monasterboyce with the Abbot O'M'Laughlin. I heard he would remain there till after the festival of Saint Maolish."

"Then we will go to Monasterboyce," said she, with cheerful assent. "Indeed I think I know the place: there is a round tower that you leave upon the left as you go from Drogheda to Dunleer; the abbey is in a valley, but the tower rises higher than the low hills about it. I remember it quite well; we were going to Sir Brian Plunket's, of Athclare Castle—" She stopped suddenly under the influence of strong emotion. Talbot fondly sought to know what it was that gave her pain, but tears were for a while his only reply; at length the afflicted girl told him—"My father was with us that day, and my mother—it was almost the last time I saw her. She sailed from Drogheda for Bristol, and she never came back. Oh, my poor father, if he were with us to-day how different would be our prospect. Oh, that he were! But no; now that he is gone, it is better that he was taken before he had seen this day!"

"If he *had* lived to see it, love—"

"Oh, it would have broken his heart!"

"Not with shame, Ellen; the father never lived that would not have been proud to call you his daughter, both to-day and every day since I first saw your face. As for me, I am prouder to call you my wife than if I were the

King of England ! May God give rest to the souls of those that are gone ; and if we speed well in our errand, I vow, by the cross of St. Boyce, that there shall be a mass said for the repose of their souls, in every abbey church within the Pale."

" And I," said Ellen, " vow, if we succeed with the Primate, a chalice of pure silver to Saint Boyce's altar, and a rich cover of filagree to the bell of the blessed Patrick at Armagh."

By this time they were at the city gates. The throng of the market was abated, and they passed on without obstacle or delay, Ellen making no inquiry as to what further steps her husband was about to take, until, in passing the fruit dealers' stalls, Talbot observed the same man whom he had so fiercely flung out of his way that morning.

" Come hither, knave," said he, his first impulse being to make him some amends for his violence ; " here is a rosenoble to cure thy bruises."

Peter for a moment stood upon his dignity, and debated whether he should not refuse the proffered guerdon ; but the sight of the coin overcame the recollection of his fall, and he stretched out his hand to receive the money.

" By my bones and body, Tierna," said he, " and that is a sore oath, it will take a full crown of this to make good the breakage of these honest men's fruit baskets : I went from your nobleness's shoulder like a putting-stone."

" I gave thee a shrewd fling, *dar lamh !*" replied Talbot, smiling ; " but now, wilt thou do a friendly turn by me ? for I want one to go to Master Witherington's on the Merchant's-quay, to tell him, that if he send a good horse, with Irish saddle and pillion-furniture, to Master

Harvey's, in the Skinner Row without delay, he will find a purchaser who will not stand upon a mark more or less, so that the beast be large and strong boned, trained to carry double, and fit in every appointment for a *Dvine Wasail* and his *Bantierna* to ride."

"Master," said Peter, "I will do the thing you ask—not in regard of being hired, as it were; for I am English by blood, and we do not render service to the Irishry, except out of simple good-will, or upon discretion, as a man might say; nevertheless, for the sake of good fellowship, which a man may practise by a man——"

"Off, knave!" cried the disguised knight; "dost thou stand to prate with me? Do my errand quickly, sirrah; there is another rosenoble where the first came from; or, if thou like not thy work, here is a fist that thou hast tasted already."

"Staff of Patrick!" cried Peter, with an exclamation, as he started off at his best pace for Witherington's; "this is O'Neill, or O'Connor at the least! He throws his money about him like a prince. These Irishry, I thought, dealt only in cows; but this *Tierna Mor*, distributes his hard coin to the full as freely as his knocks, and that, as one of his own kern might say, is plenty *go leor*."

Meanwhile, the young couple proceeded up the steep Werburgh-street. There had been frequent shots all the morning from the castle walls against the insurgent's batteries at Preston's Inns; and now, as they came near the castle, they passed many groups gathered about the street corners, busied with speculations on the progress of the siege. The rebel cannon had not yet begun to play, but all the neighbourhood of the barbican echoed with sharp and continued discharges of matchlocks and other small arms. So accustomed were both to these sounds of strife, that neither Talbot nor his bride bestowed much

attention on that quarter, until they found themselves on the open ground in front of Christ Church. Here, at the end of the Skinner's Row, they were obliged to come to a stand, from the throng of citizens that lined the nearer side of the street, under shelter of the houses, watching the motions of the insurgents on the right, where all the slope of the hill between them and the castle was crowded with native troops and covered with gabions, fascines, and the various material of such operations. This part of the besiegers' position was protected by the buildings on a line with that side of the castle wall, but all the foot of the hill was within range from the barbican, and there a corps of pioneers and sappers were busy raising a breast-work of earth, and constructing the platform of their battery, under a smart fire, as has been said, from the threatened walls in front.

"Who is their captain of the trenches?" Talbot heard one citizen demand of his neighbour.

"A foster-brother of *Tomás-an-Teeda* himself," was the reply; "one Captain Perez."

"But is it true that any of the villains we have just heard excommunicated hold command in the rebel battery?"

"True enough, Sir; Wafer and Teeling are both there; I saw them ride down within the last quarter of an hour. The horrid wretches! 'tis little good can come of the work they have their bloody hands in: as for Talbot, there is a report that he has strangled himself."

"A fit end for him, but foul play, Sir, for the hangman. Ah, by Saint George, it makes the blood of an Englishman boil to see Irish rebels tearing up our streets to plant their cannon against the King's castle, without let or hindrance, in the very midst of us."

"Never fret thy heart, neighbour; the castle will hold

out for a good three months. Hark ye—the mayor and aldermen had a meeting to-day; and what do you think they have done?"

"I know not—mined the rebel battery, ha?"

"No; but they have sent Master Herbert to the King: he sails this evening; and, hark ye, on the royal answer will depend whether we keep our terms with these scum of rebellion or no."

"I would he were gone and come again: but, ho! yonder come more of them—saints and martyrs! there be not less than a hundred wild galloglass under yonder pennon."

"I know the ensign well: it is Burnel's of Balgriffen. Hunger and thirst be his portion! it was he who counselled to stop the passes out of Meath: three of my curriers were within a meal of being famished—sweet Queen of Heaven, to see how they ravened at the raw hides! But here come these rascal Irishry; a curse upon them for prick-eared hairy savages!" As he spoke, there was a stir among the multitude, and Talbot pushed his way through, just as Burnel's troop came up at a sharp trot from the bridge. At the same moment a child, a fine boy of about five, ran out upon the skirt of the crowd, and stood gazing, in infantine amazement, on the show. A galloglass observing him, dismounted as the troop filed past, and caught him up. He was holding the infant on his saddle bow, and had taken his grasp of the mane, to leap to his stirrupless seat, when Talbot started forward and seized him.

"Villain!" he cried, "let the child go! As I live by bread, it is little Jeniko Harvey!—why Jeniko, my boy, do you not know me?"

The galloglass, who would probably have struck his skene through the body of anyone in English costume

that had taken such rude hold of him, stood for a moment hesitating whether to resist or obey the commands of the seeming Duine Wasail; but before he had either yielded the child or made an actual struggle to retain him, a horseman dashed up the hill, from the castle, calling to Burnel to hurry on with his troop. “*Dar dioul!*” he cried, “what dispute is this?—ho, Tieg Ballagh, mount!—never mind the child; there are enough already. Keep together in the rere, *mo vouchalee*. Push on, Master Burnel; we shall be ready to unmask the culverins in less than five minutes.”

It was Perez, and it was well that Talbot stood between Ellen and his enemy’s glance; for, although his native costume was an effectual disguise in his own case, so long as he stood alone, he would soon have been discovered had she been recognised. As it was, the galloglass relinquished his hold of the child, and the knight, taking him in his arms, turned away, though reluctant to shrink from the eye of any man, and above all other from that of his rival and mortal foe.

“My poor child!—it is doubly fortunate that I saved him, Ellen,” he said, as he directed his steps towards the lower end of the Row, next the Ormond Gate. “It will need some such service to conciliate his father, with whom I must have dealings that will betray my identity before we can start upon our journey.”

“He is a sweet boy,” she replied; “saints forbid that any harm should happen to him! What could the Irish soldier have wanted with the infant?”

“I cannot tell, in truth; but I suspect some villainy.”

As he spoke, there was a confused clamour among the more distant crowd, that soon swelled into cries of rage and despair. The rebels had seized the children of the richest citizens, and it was reported that they were about

to place them on the top of their breastwork, to deter the garrison of the castle from firing on their engineers! Every parent that heard the news imagined his or her child foremost in the sacrifice. "Queen of Heaven! who saw my little Mary?"—"Willy, Willy my child, where are you?"—"Oh, holy and blessed Patrick! what has become of my darling infants?"—"To arms, to arms! gather down to the castle every man! Will you stand by and see your children made marks for the bullets and arrows of your own friends? Bring bills and hatchets; we are enough to trample the unnatural villains into their own trenches if we but strike together!"—"King of the elements! there go the battering cannon!" such were the exclamations as the loud report of the first salvo of three pieces of heavy ordnance came with a stunning effect on the agitated multitude.

Ellen shuddered as the crackling rattle of small arms from the castle wall grew distinct after the heavier explosion from the batteries had ceased, and would have given way to exclamations of terror, but just then a respectable matron rushed out of the door of a warehouse a little farther on, screaming in such an agony of anguish as kept her involuntarily silent before the power of a more overwhelming grief. It was the mother of little Jeniko, and as she flew past, the child cried out and stretched forth his arms: but she saw him not; she had missed him but the moment before, and was persuaded that he was set up as a mark for the castle garrison. Talbot shouted to her; but his voice was drowned in the universal uproar, and the crowd, which made ready way for the frantic steps of a mother seeking her lost child, refused, until too late, to open before the pursuit of one in whose object they did not sympathise. At the same moment there arose a fresh commotion; for a new party

of the insurgents came galloping furiously in from the Ormond Gate, and drove the people before them with headlong violence, as they thundered up past Christ Church cloisters. Their leader's face was flushed with honest indignation. "I am ashamed of the cause!" he cried, as his troop went past like a whirlwind. There was no need to turn to recognise Sir Oliver Fitzgerald: he was attended by De la Hyde and about a dozen other gentlemen. Seeing the hopelessness of overtaking Dame Harvey in the midst of such confusion, Talbot went straight to her husband's house. The warehouse in front was deserted; everything was lying open to the street. Talbot called aloud, but neither Master Harvey nor any of his people came. The child, terrified at all he had witnessed, and dreading he knew not what, from not seeing his parents in their accustomed places, wept aloud, and clung to Ellen. In the meantime, through the unglazed windows the people could be heard exclaiming—"Saints in glory! see what a dust rose at that last discharge!—ah, there goes a buttress at the least, or a great piece of the main wall; did you hear the rumble? White cannot hold out three days before such battering as this."

"Oh, if the poor unfortunate children were safe I should not care if they took the castle to-morrow."

"Unnatural monsters! they were born without mothers, or they could not have the heart to do it. But I can't believe it: I heard a man in the crowd say it was all false."

"I pray Heaven it may be so; but it was told me that Alderman FitzSimon's little boy—God help the poor young creature, and he not eight years old!—was set upon the top of one of the baskets of earth that they have at each side of every gun, and that before they

had fired twice he had dropped dead, out of mere terror."

"That can't be, for I saw his father but now, and he says he left them all safe at the New Gate not ten minutes ago."

"I'm sure I hope heartily it may be so—but sweet Virgin have pity on poor Mistress Harvey! I wonder has she found her little boy."

As the citizen spoke Master Harvey and some of his friends appeared, bearing in his wife, who had sunk under terror and exhaustion, after a fruitless search for her child down to the very trenches of the Irish. The moment the father's eye fell on his son, he snatched him up, and, without waiting to bestow more than a single caress on his recovered treasure, placed him on the bosom of his half-insensible wife: the child put his arms about his mother's neck, and the warm touch of his little cheeks and hands restored her: she strained him to her breast, uttering the low, quivering Irish cry of joy, and before its prolonged cadence died away, the little boy's face was steeped with her tears, and her heart was lightened of all its burden of terror—she was now only oppressed with gratitude—"Oh, God be praised for ever! but whom am I to thank, under Him, for bringing back my darling? Why, they had him up on one of their horses! My child, my darling child, who was it that saved you?"

The boy raised his tearful face, and at once pointed to Talbot, who, with Ellen, stood at the entrance into the more private part of the warehouse; for Master Harvey, who was an armourer and goldsmith, as well as a drapier, had a back apartment separated from his clothing stalls, where his goods of greater value were arranged for the eyes of the more wealthy and curious. The glad mother advanced, with eager gratitude, to give her

thanks and blessings to the preserver of her only little one; but Talbot motioned her to follow him to the apartment described, and did not allow her to take his hand or look in his face till they were out of sight of those without. The poor woman thought that, perhaps he meant to ask for some remuneration, and desired to prefer his claim without exposing his necessity to strangers; and she had already fixed on such a present as she thought should fully satisfy a man so circumstanced; but when she went close to him, notwithstanding all the change of dress, she recognised his features at a glance. Talbot stood with his finger on his lips: Dame Harvey set her little boy down, and turned pale as she crossed herself, and drew back, as if from the infection of the plague. Ellen kept close to her bridegroom, and took his hand: not a word was spoken as yet by one of the three. At last Talbot said, in a low voice, "Dame, I am an innocent and wronged man. The charge made against me is false!" She was making the sign of the cross over her child: she now seemed to consider him polluted by the touch of Talbot: she looked at Ellen with an expression of intense pity; but, while tears of compassion came again to her eyes she felt a superstitious horror at the thought of her boy's contamination.

"Call in Master Harvey," said Talbot, loud enough to be heard in the outer apartment. The worthy trader started, for he thought he knew the voice: but surely it could not be! He dismissed those who were with him, and having closed the half door, and cast a careful look at the barring of the stall windows, obeyed the summons, but not without a presentiment that there was something amiss. On entering, he found his wife, in pitiable trepidation, with a jar of consecrated water, sprinkling the child. "It is Talbot himself," she whispered in a tone

of horror, as he came in. "My stars, my blessed stars ! what has brought him here ? "

The child was too much frightened by his mother's earnestness to reply, or he would have reminded her of the so soon forgotten obligation ; but Harvey himself, although his countenance expressed his dismay, was not deprived of reflection by his consternation. "Alack, alack," cried he, "that it should ever have come to this ! Sir John, Sir John, I told you your courses would bring you to a bad end some day. You are lost—lost—and although you have saved my child, my house is cursed by your presence, from the hearth-stone to the king-post. God help me ! I would not be the man to be churlish of my thanks for a service ; but what can I do ? what can I do ? "

"Master Harvey," said Talbot, in the irritation of momentary disgust, "there are some trinkets of my mother's that I left with you the day before yesterday."

"You did, you did," exclaimed the trader, bustling in his drawers, and presently taking forth the pieces of jewellery, with trembling hands he spread them on the top of the cabinet. "There they are, all ; take them yourself, Sir John ; you will find them all there."

"Master Harvey," continued the knight, "what I want is this : you value these trinkets at two hundred and ten pieces : give me one hundred ; I have indeed, a pressing necessity, and it would aid me much. Give me one hundred gold pieces and a straight sword—I should wish a Milan blade, if it please you ; these and a good dagger, and keep the trinkets for me for a month ; and if I pay you not within that time, why, keep them, and let them be your own. Do you mark me, Master Harvey ? a hundred gold pieces, a Milan blade, silver-mounted, as fits a gentleman, and a good dagger."

"I have furnished you with one dagger too much already, Sir John Talbot."

"Death and perdition, Sir, I am sick of this babble ! Give me the money and the weapons at once, or say that you will not. By the bright heaven, these sordid hypocrites would drive a man mad !"

"I am no hypocrite, Sir John Talbot," said the merchant; but he spoke mildly for a man contradicting so odious a charge, for his eye, even as it was kindling into defiance, fell on the child, and he remembered how irritating his wife's unconscious question of "what brought him here?" must have been to one who had rendered them so vital a service. "I am no hypocrite, Sir John Talbot: sordid I may be, for trade makes all men love profit; yet I owe you more for what you have done for me to-day than the value of these trinkets ten times over. Here is the money; here are the weapons; take them, Sir John; take trinkets and all; and if you need more, take more. There is my open till—put in your hand; take all you want: but, for the sake of an honest man and a happy family, go your ways in peace; we shall pay dear for the time you have been here already!"

"Master Harvey," said Talbot, deeply moved, "I have been sorely tried to-day: I feel it an insult to myself to make further protestations of innocence in that charge; and so, forgive my impatience; you said no more than I must be prepared to expect from every man who penetrates my disguise. Master Harvey—but this is not to the point, yet I will tell you—I was married this morning to this lady—" "Alack, alack !" cried poor Mistress Harvey, and came forward the moment she heard the words—"and when I took her hand in mine for better for worse, I had as little thought of what was going to happen as if Archbishop Alan had never lived. Ah, gracious powers !

to think that I could bring you before God's altar with the blood of a murdered bishop hardly cold upon the hands that shed it—it is more, Ellen, love, than the heart of man, wicked as it is, could ever imagine; it is more than the world ever can or ever will believe! But, Master Harvey, what I would say is, forgive me my impatience! I do not need to use your generous offer; this sum will be enough for our present necessities. We are going to claim the interference of the church! and you see, Master Harvey, that there is one here who believes in my innocence, and is willing to share my fortunes; so that, I thank God, I am not so wretched under this trial as you may at first have supposed."

Sir John took up the money and the weapons, and, buckling on the sword, turned to the street door, where a horse was now waiting, as he had desired. While he was engaged in making his purchase—and he had betaken himself to it the earlier, because he felt his own words were beginning to unman him—Ellen had been detained by the first act of kindness or sympathy she had met with from another since taking on herself her share of the odium and abhorrence her unfortunate husband had that morning been subjected to. Dame Harvey had risen with exclamations of pity and astonishment when she heard that she was Talbot's wife, and the more the good woman considered her situation, the more was her heart touched with compassion for her; so young as she was—so blameless and so devoted. As Talbot spoke, she had drawn nearer to her, gazing with increasing solicitude on both, and gradually overcoming the selfishness of superstitious fear, until, when they turned to go away, she could resist her compassionate impulses no longer, but yielded at once to a gush of generous tenderness, and, bursting into tears, took Ellen by the hand. "My poor child," she said, "my

poor young affectionate creature, God help you! it is a hard trial you have to go through. Alack, alack! it is he that has a good right to be the kind husband to you: and have you hopes, dear, that you will get the—the—that the church will listen to you favourably at all?"

"Indeed, Madam," replied poor Ellen, "I can hardly say why, but I do hope for the best, and I put great trust in the goodness of God. We are going first to Archbishop Cromer."

"And where is he, dear?"

"We hope to find him at Monasterboye; and if he be not there, we are willing to go farther."

"I wish to Heaven, my poor daughter, I could; but I dare not; and yet if I could I would ask you to stay; but, alack——"

"Dear Madam, I would not delay an hour on this journey for anything that I know of, except the pardon we go to seek. Oh, if we had that, I should not need much pressing, for friends like you will be rare with us till then."

"Alack-a-day, I am not half the friend I ought to be; but, my daughter, you are going to ride; we must seek you out some fitter travelling gear than this light mantle; and his poor hundred pieces, that is but a scant provision for the road; and, alas, he has no way of making more."

"Dear Madam," said Ellen, showing the jewel case which Talbot had placed in her hands when he turned to deal with the owner of the horse—"Dear Madam, we have enough—we have more than enough; if we had but as good fortune in everything else, we should indeed be happy."

"Well, dear, it makes me glad to hear you say so; though I should have been better pleased if I could have

helped you; but, now that I look at your face again—why, surely I know you, dear!—Queen of Glory! it is our old neighbour Dudley's daughter!" The good woman's hospitable solicitude now overbore all recollection of her terror and its cause. She made Ellen sit down; she hurried to place refreshment before her: she was full of grief for her father's untimely end, and talked with kindly and sincere emotion of his virtues, his integrity, and his neighbourly and friendly goodwill towards her and her's: but Ellen, although she, too, was fluttered for a moment into the admission of new feelings, much sooner found the thought that was, from the first, nearest her heart assert its mastery over the rest. "I cannot, indeed I cannot," she said, as the kind woman urged her to eat, and pressed her to taste of a cup of Spanish wine; "dear Madam, I cannot eat: I must go to my husband; Sir John is waiting for me, and I must not stay away from him now."

Good Mistress Harvey was at once recalled from the field of more congenial sentiment, where her naturally tender feelings, glad of their release from restraint, would fain have played the truant a little longer; but she started at the mention of Talbot's name, and in an instant was covered with renewed confusion. She saw that the pride of the poor girl would not permit her to partake of hospitality from which her husband was excluded, the thought of letting one in his condition break bread with her or her family was so repulsive to herself, that she could not endure it. She got up in pitiable distress, as Ellen meekly rose from the table. "Alack-a-day, alas, and alack-a-day!" she exclaimed, "that ever the time should come when I dare not ask your father's son-in-law to sit at my board or drink but a poor cup of wine with me! but I dare not: I dare not"—and the poor woman's eye glanced again, with an expression of dread and deprecation,

towards the little vessel of holy-water that she had replaced, with its sprinkler of rosemary, on the mantelpiece. “I dare not do it, dear ; I have my child to look to, and we are an honest house, that never had shame or blame laid to our door.”

“Indeed, Madam,” said Ellen, “it is not that I do not feel your kindness as I ought; we must expect only aversion and horror wherever we are recognised. I should be making light of the inflictions of Providence were I to say that it does not pain me; but believe me, I can bear it as I have borne worse sorrows.”

While Ellen spoke, Dame Harvey was busied in turning over a pile of her richest ladies’ attire: she took up and put aside many costly habits, until at last she came to one of less showy embroidery, and of a sadder colour, that seemed to suit best the purpose she had destined for it: with kindly violence she forced her young guest—if guest she could be called—to array herself in this, instead of the thin mantle she wore. “You would be welcome to the richest in my house, dear,” said the good woman; “but this is what will suit you best on your present journey: there—you are now fitter, I ween, to face the weather and the wild roads. Ah, I’ll warrant it becomes you well: by my troth, it looks better on you than many a costlier;” and with look of renewed complacency she led her out to the front warehouse. Here stood Talbot on the threshold; a saddled and pillioned horse was held by Peter at the door. Master Harvey was leaning with his head on his hand over one of the benches.

“Dear John,” said Ellen, as her husband held out his hand to receive her, “had we not better leave this box in some place of safety? I am sure good Master Harvey would keep it for us till we return.”

“You are right, love, you are always right. Master
SER. III.

Harvey, will you take charge of this casquet for us : it contains some jewels of too great value to risk upon the roads ? ”

“ Sir John,” replied the merchant, hesitatingly, “ I will be free with you : I would rather not have anything of yours within my walls so long as this ex——this——this infliction of the church’s anger remains in force.”

“ But they are not mine, Master Harvey ; at least I have touched but the outside of the box. Open the case, Ellen, love, and Master Harvey may take them out with his own hands.” Ellen, smiling, unlocked the casquet, and laid open a shallow bed of padded velvet, in which lay three unmounted brilliants, of such size and splendour, as made the air about them absolutely blaze with flashing coruscations, like the light of so many stars of the first magnitude in a winter sky.

The eyes of the honest merchant dilated to twice their usual size ; but his prudence suppressed the louder admiration of his wife. He enjoined silence, and speaking low, hastily closed the box, forgetful of its contamination —“ Sir John,” said he, “ these are jewels of immense value ! I am afraid to take the custody of so great a treasure.”

“ They cannot be in safer hands,” said Talbot ; “ I would trust them with you if they were worth thrice as much.”

“ They are of enormous value, Sir John ! there is one of the most celebrated stones in Europe among them ; I saw a model of it at the Duke of Burgundy’s jeweller’s at Liege, and knew it at a glance ; it weighs eighteen carats and a grain, and but for a flaw on one of the demi-rosette faces would be the third finest stone in the King’s dominions.”

“ Knowing its value so well,” said Ellen, “ you will take better care of it for us, Master Harvey : and, dear

John, as a hundred pieces will not go far; if we must journey on to overtake the Archbishop, I would pray Master Harvey to let us have a better supply of gold upon this security."

The merchant gladly handed Talbot double the first sum; and, placing the jewel case with great care in an inner drawer, cordially attended the young couple to the door. The image of the extinguished taper was no longer dark in the mind's eye of the worthy man; the blazing picture of the diamond filled the whole scope of his inner vision: he forgot bell, book, and candle; and not only lifted Ellen to the pillion, but, in his dazzled bewilderment, actually wrung Talbot by the hand extended to him at parting. The knight could not suppress a smile as he left him gazing in renewed trepidation on the delinquent member, for he held his hand open and at arm's-length till the excommunicated man had passed out of eyeshot, then hastened to wipe away the infection with a handkerchief, which he cast out into the kennel. Honest Peter picked up the abhorred waif, but whether it proved a conductor of the church's fulmination, history does not relate.

Meanwhile the alarm of the citizens had subsided: the report which had caused them such consternation had originated in a threat of Parez, which it is believed he would have carried into effect but for the timely arrival of Sir Oliver Fitzgerald; and now a fortunate shot from the barbican dismounted one of the rebel guns, and a second becoming unfit for present use by over frequent firing, the breaching operations went on less vigorously; and, from the slight impression hitherto made upon the battered wall, from which a projecting turret only had been beaten, and from the great depth of the ditch, and strength of the inner defences, the hopes of the citizens began to

rise, and much less anxiety was exhibited than in the earlier part of the day.

But what were battles or sieges to those now riding through the green alleys of Glasnevin?—for Talbot, who knew the country well, preferred the less frequented road by the interior. War and its tumults had no part in them: their hearts were calm; for a settled confidence in the fortunate result of their appeal, while it kept them cheerful in the mutual consciousness of minds at ease, left them without occasion to allude to any of those late trials or afflictions which each knew that the other hoped to remember only as the future contrasts of many a bright day of happiness and honour. And yet their converse could not but be touched by the uniform melancholy of the events in which they had lately borne a part; and although their hearts were lightened of a great part of their burdens, and their words no longer had to struggle with the painfully familiar emotions of actual bereavement, disappointment, or undeserved injury, what they said, after their conversation turned upon themselves, was, for the most part, characterised by a quiet tenderness, that neither rose above the animation of hope nor sunk below the confidential repose of satisfied expectation. They were all the world to one another; but theirs had been a world of sorrow, and they scarce sought for different attributes in the breasts that each had taken for that world's substitute: yet, mournful as their spoken communion was, the summer evening never fell on two more satisfied young creatures going out upon a world of care and trouble in the pride of their hearts' conscious strength of affection—two beings more chastened by suffering, or more tenderly yet firmly endeared by mutual support in its endurance. It was sweet to see the considerate delicacy with which each would conceal the ever reviving recollection of their

misfortunes: not but that each knew well what bitter memories must be in the other's breast; but capable of being relieved by mutual sympathy, trust, and affection. Talbot, when he looked at his unwonted dress or equipage—Ellen, at every return from abstractions, frequently as full of mournful associations as the realities around her, would sigh to think of the fate which neither would lament, because both were its victims.

Keenly did the unfortunate knight feel his exclusion from the society of the friends whose castles or strengths of various kinds they passed so frequently upon their way. At no place did it strike him with a sharper pang than on the next day, when, as they rode within view of the tower of Athcarne, at a little distance among the woods, it began to rain violently, and he found that he had unconsciously turned from the road, and was half-way to the gates that he dared not enter. Ellen saw his error, and, with delicacy of feeling apprised him of it by simply asking had he not taken the wrong road for Drogheda. "Ah, I had forgotten," he said bitterly, and checked his horse; but he saw his bride's sympathy in his mortification, and added, with kind playfulness, "and yet if poor Catherine De Bath were warden of the bawn, Ellen, I could get admission still, but that sweet wife-like face of yours—Heaven bless it!—tells too plainly its tale of sorrow; but here, love, we shall get shelter under this tree as good every whit as in my cousin's castle."

The short shower passed, and they had thenceforth fair weather. They reached Drogheda that afternoon, and while the evening was still bright and cheerful, got the first sight of the great landmark of their journey's end, rising, as Ellen had described, above the low hills in whose bosom Saint Boyce had, ten centuries before, set

up among the pagan population the sign of Redemption. The evening was calm and sunny, and from the open upland, across which the shadows of the solitary horseman and his companion lay far in the level light, the whole heart of the Pale, from the Dublin hills upon the south to Slieve Donard and the Mourne mountains northward, and from the sea upon the right to where the western horizon dipped on the rich flats of Meath and Oriel, lay smiling in the sunshine, and flinging forth with teeming prodigality, the golden wealth of an already ripening harvest. Behind, the towers of Drogheda were touched into dusky splendour on all their inland battlements and buttresses; the valley of the Boyne, on one side revealing its calm pomp of waters in sheets of frequent light among the woods, and on the other the outspread sea, stretching to the sky in a clear expanse of blue, that rivalled the heaven's own azure. But before them in the green hollow, half way up the hill's declivity, stood, lonely and wan as a ghost in the daylight, the grey round-tower of the monastery, of all the objects that the eye could dwell on in that ample scope of rich and cheerful scenery, the only one that took no mellowing tint from the sweet influences of the hour. The abbey and the chapel beyond it, and the great stone crosses standing beside, all shone in the rich sunset with warm and blended hues; but the tower, in its ancient mantle of pale stone-crop, rose from the midst cold and overcasting as its own shadow.

Perhaps it was that the sudden sight of an object so startlingly at variance with the prevailing character of the scene awakened corresponding sentiments in Ellen's mind, for she found herself now much more anxious and distrustful than she had been since they first determined on the course they were pursuing. She involuntarily put

her hand upon the reins, and Talbot drew up. "Are you quite sure," she asked, with emphatic earnestness, "that you will run no danger in discovering yourself to the Primate?" Talbot, who had taken the resolution of appealing to Cromer more on the impulse of a generous spirit, that calculates on motives like its own in every man's breast, than on any well pondered consideration of the case, and who, in truth, had not been thinking of what was to be done so much as of what had already happened, was ill prepared for such a question. "By my honour, Ellen, I did not think of that: but surely Cromer would not take advantage of a man who came voluntarily before him in his own defence. A single suspicion of danger, as I am a gentleman, never entered my mind; but here we are close to the monastery: danger or no danger, I cannot hesitate now."

"But if there be danger we must hesitate," said Ellen, with affectionate firmness; "do you think that the Primate would permit you to escape if you failed in convincing him of your innocence?"

"I vow, I hardly know what to think: if I went to him as his penitent——"

"He would not receive your confession: you must appeal to him as his petitioner."

"What, not receive my confession—how could he refuse?"

"Alas, dear John, you are not now like others. It pains my heart to put you in mind of the woeful difference that there is between your state to-day and what it was when you came to St. Patrick's church yesterday morning."

"Ah," he cried, suddenly remembering that he was now without the pale of the Catholic church, and could claim no right or privilege of a Christian—"Alas! I had

forgotten ; nevertheless, I will go to him as an innocent man. I care not—ah, Ellen, but for your sake, I would have said, I care not what comes of it."

"For my sake, then," said she, "do not go : ever since we came in sight of the place I have felt that good would not come of it. I will go myself; I know all; I can tell your story from beginning to end. Dear John, let me plead your cause: believe me, I am so satisfied of its truth, that I cannot fail. You have told me every circumstance I am sure—but, is there anything else that you remember since we spoke about it last?"

"Nothing, dear Ellen; I have told you all: there might be danger, I confess; yet it makes me blush to shrink thus on the very threshold. I never thought, Ellen, that I should live to see the day when I would consent to send you where I fear to go myself."

"Dearest, for me there is no danger, whatever may be the result; but it would be death to both if you should go and fail. Here we will alight: now I shall laugh to see you play the squire for me. Come, Master Giles, hold me my horse here outside the gates, and I will go in by myself. Ah, John, love, take care that you do not betray yourself." He pressed her hand in silence, for they dared not trust themselves with an embrace; and the devoted wife walked forward to the monastery. Shame and admiration held divided sway for a moment in the breast of Talbot; but when he saw Ellen, after making some inquiry of a monk at the gates, enter alone, his heart rose indignant at its own cowardice, and he followed her.

"Where is the Archbishop?" he demanded of the porter.

"His lordship is walking with the abbot; he will be here presently: your lady awaits his coming in the churchyard." Talbot advanced a step, and beheld Ellen

kneeling at the foot of the great stone cross to the right of the monastery : the rich light made all its sculptured figures stand out in warm relief, save when her shadow fell on the foot of the shaft, as she knelt, with folded hands and head meekly bowed, awaiting her husband's and her own fate. He could not look at such a sight without feeling that her's was a fitter preparation. "I will not disturb her," he said, and walked back, satisfied to leave his cause in her hands. Ellen, unconscious of her husband's momentary observation, continued kneeling meekly before Murdach's cross. At first her expectation of the Archbishop's coming had, perhaps, mingled more human anxiety with her supplication for the Divine protection and support than she could have wished to accompany her appeal to the Mercy-seat; but ere long she had felt her heart penetrated with feelings of unmixed devotion, and now knelt absorbed in earnest prayer, as motionless in the calm evening light as the figures carved upon the stone before her. She was aroused from the sweet and relieving communion of an innocent heart reposing with full reliance on the goodness of God, by a "Benedicite," pronounced in a mild tone by some one at her side. She rose, and saw the Archbishop before her—not that she had previously known his person, but the dignity of the Primate's appearance was sufficient indication of his exalted rank.

"Bless you, daughter," he said, and Ellen bowed her head low under the benediction ; "thou hast been seeking One, who, if thy looks and heart be in accordance, will not be slow to hear thy supplication. The sacristan hath told me thou wouldest speak with me."

"My lord," said Ellen rising—and she hesitated, in order to think of some preface to her story, but her heart had no room for any thought save the one, and she could

not avoid the abruptness of opening her purpose at once:—"My lord, I have come from Dublin to appeal to your lordship on behalf of a noble gentleman—" but she again stopped short, confused to think how strange her coming on such an errand must appear to one who did not know in what relation she stood by him whom she desired to befriend.

"Is it thy father, my child?" asked the Archbishop, willing to relieve her embarrassment by a question to which he anticipated only a negative reply.

"Alas, no, my lord: my father is dead."

"We must all die," said the considerate old man, still willing to give her time: "and thy father, who hath but gone before us, who was he?"

"My lord, my father was a merchant well known in Dublin—Paul Dudley of the Wharf."

"What, the loyal alderman who led the sally against the rebels at Kilmainham?"

"Alas, yes, my lord; and was slain in the retreat through Salcock Wood."

"Ah, the brave old man! I knew him but by sight, but his name ever came to my ears joined with esteem and honour. And thou, my daughter, art thou left alone in the world by this calamity?"

"My lord, if it please you, no: before my father's death I had long been betrothed to a gentleman; and, when my father was dying he sanctioned what we have done—we were married in Dublin yesterday."

"That was somewhat of the soonest after a father's death," said Cromer, gravely.

"Indeed, my lord, I would fain have deferred it," replied Ellen; "but when your lordship hears our story, you will not so much blame us."

"I am not wont to seek for cause for blame against

any," replied the Archbishop; but why do I see one so short a time a bride here alone among strangers?—who, and where is thy husband?"

"My lord, it is upon his—it is upon my husband's behalf, that I come: he is that unfortunate knight, Sir John Talbot."

The Archbishop started, and took a paper hurriedly from his breast: he cast a single glance at it, and folded it again; but his hands shook as he put it up, and his placid features grew flushed with sudden emotion. Ellen stood trembling, for she was confounded to find that what she doubted not was the news of Alan's murder had arrived before her. The Archbishop was the first to speak:—"I fear me much, young woman, this marriage will stand strongly against the good of thy soul. Dost thou come to look for absolution? wouldst thou seek to have the unholy vows dispensed?"

"I come, my lord, if it please you, for redress," she replied, and her heart gratefully acknowledged its returning strength. "My husband had no part in the crime with which they charge him; and I come to implore your lordship to aid us in having that dreadful curse, unjustly pronounced against him, remitted. I would not recall my vows to him, my lord, for he is an innocent and a true man, and I would not desert him who has been so wronged."

"Alas," said the Archbishop, "this is but the fondness of an over trusting heart: none but a young bride in her honeymoon could think so in the face of these proofs: why, child, he is caught in the very act and accomplishment of the bloody sacrilege. Ah, he must be a cruel and an impious man! Heaven pardon me if I bore an ill opinion of my murdered brother; but, heretic though I fear he was, it is enough to make every priest of the

Christian church shudder to think of his tragical end. Young woman, thou canst not follow the fortunes of an excommunicated man!"

Ellen's heart failed her and she felt her limbs grow weak as she saw with what a strength of conviction she had now to contend: she leaned against the shaft of the cross, unconscious for an instant of the nature of her support, until, in raising her eyes to heaven with a mute appeal, as the Archbishop concluded, she saw the great arms overhead outstretched as if to protect her, and she rallied again. "Oh, my lord," she cried, "spare us until you hear our story. Alas, I am his only advocate; but, I will not tell your lordship aught save that which I believe in my heart to be true. If this holy sign of our salvation were to fall and crush me where I stand, it would be a light punishment compared with that which I should merit if I sought to deceive your lordship in the matter of my husband's accusation. Good, my lord, hear me; in the name of him who died on the Cross, hear our story, and judge us justly!"

The Archbishop's countenance had lost its severity, and an expression of commiseration and respect showed itself in his relaxing features. "Go on, my poor daughter," he said; "I dare not refuse that call. I cannot think thee insincere; and from my heart I pity thee, and pray the great Bishop of our souls to guide thy heart aright in the trial that awaits thee."

"Then, my lord," said Ellen, "with thanks and blessings I will open that whole heart before Heaven and you:" and she proceeded with earnest minuteness, to detail all that had happened to herself, and all that she had heard from Talbot, from the morning of her departure with Archbishop Alan for England, down to the hour of their marriage and of Talbot's excommunication. Her eyes

were fixed on the ground for a great part of the time, but as she dwelt on each circumstance corroborative of her husband's innocence, she ventured to raise them to the face of the Primate, and time after time she withdrew her eyes in increasing distrust and anxiety, for, alas, although the tenderer evidence of pity for herself remained glistening in the good man's eyes, there was no change in the rigid compression of the lips which marked his unshaken rejection of every plea in her husband's behalf. At length she ceased: she could remember nothing else to urge, and she stood with piteous looks imploring a favourable judgment. The Archbishop sighed, but was silent. "Besides, my lord," she exclaimed, as another thought occurred to her, "what credit can we give to a man who violates the secrets of the confessional? Doctor Travers' evidence is unworthy of belief. He could not produce that serving-man, who is alleged to have heard Sir John Talbot threaten the Archbishop's life."

"Ah, daughter," replied the Archbishop, glad in his own turn to avoid the main question for a moment, "thou doest Master Travers a grievous injustice: that evidence was but communicated to him as a case of conscience. Had he divulged the sealed confession of his penitent, it must have been indeed fatal to all credit for his words in this world, as it would be to all hopes for his immortal soul in the next."

"Well, my lord, although he has been so bitter an enemy, I am rejoiced to know that even in this I have been mistaken; for, indeed, my husband's innocence can spare the confirmation of his accuser's guilt. I should be content to abandon whatever would do injustice to another, even in strengthening our claims for justice for ourselves. My lord, when we determined to come to you, it was not

by consultation, but on a sudden, and, as it seemed, a divine, impulse, that came upon us at the same moment, when we were kneeling praying to God for His direction, in the fields beside St. Patrick's church at Dublin. Oh, my lord, if I have failed with you, I do not know what to think ! for it was on this assurance I came here to-day, and spoke as your lordship has heard."

"Alas, my daughter," said the Archbishop, "our hearts are full of deceitfulness, and we often mistake the involuntary suggestions of our own wills for the impulses of a spirit rarely vouchsafed, but never ineffectually. My poor daughter, it pains my heart to tell thee, this impulse which hath brought thee to me has not approved itself of higher birth than it can claim from thine own fallible and, I fear me much, deceived and lost affections. Seest thou not that all the justification thou wouldst put forward on this miserable man's behalf resteth solely on his own testimony imparted to thyself ? I know well, my daughter, how the trusting heart of a woman will cheat itself into the belief that what its own affections wish for must be true ; for love is blind only to defect, and sees all present or supposed advantage with the exaggerating eyes of its own intoxication. My child, that sacred symbol against which thou leanest bears the rude representation of sufferings such as thy human sorrows could never be compared with, even in the eyes of love. Bethink thee now of what the Redeemer suffered for thy sake ; remember what was the woe of His Virgin Mother ; and if thou canst for a time look lightly on thine own anguish in comparison, answer me the question I shall ask."

Ellen looked upward in silent prayer ; and having thus fortified her mind, and mastered her emotion, addressed the Prelate. "My lord, I am prepared to hear and to reply to your question."

"Daughter," the Archbishop began, tenderly but gravely, "the ban of excommunication, as thou knowest, deprives the accursed person of all benefit from any rite or ceremony of the church whatever, but especially when on its fulmination such rite is incomplete—"

"My lord," said Ellen, "I pray you to pardon me my boldness; but, if it please you, I would ask your lordship to permit me to shorten this part of our case, by asking my question first; as on your lordship's answer to it, much of my remaining chance of happiness must depend."

"Ask freely, my daughter: this is the boldness that becomes virtue, and I would not put thee to its exercise but for the honour and protection of that self-esteem which thou dost so becomingly assert."

"My lord, I humbly thank you, and without presumption would beg to ask, whether a censure of the church be not void, if inflicted on a false accusation?"

"Undoubtedly, null and void."

"And again, my lord—pardon my importunity—I would ask, whether it be not possible that a censure might be so inflicted?"

"We claim no infallibility, save for the general councils and decrees of the church."

"Then, my lord, since I am satisfied that Sir John Talbot has been excommunicated undeservedly, I am assured that our marriage is not annulled by that censure, and I will continue to live with my husband, let the world say what it will."

"God help her!" exclaimed Cromer, turning his head aside to conceal emotions which he could no longer repress.

Ellen, emboldened by her consciousness of rectitude and the marked effect of her last declaration, addressed him again—"Oh, my lord, we are ready to submit ourselves

to any penance the Church may require ; we will go, if it please your lordship, on a pilgrimage either to Lough Derg or Holycross, or to both. My lord, we are ready to go barefoot to the Holy Sepulchre, if need be—anything, good my lord, anything for the remission of this unjust sentence ! ”

“ Alas, alas, my unfortunate child, I would I could help thee : but nothing can now avail ; nothing save the proof by other witnesses of all that this unhappy knight alleges as of his own knowledge.”

“ My lord, how are we to procure other evidence of what no man saw save himself ? ”

“ You cannot, you cannot :—I would I could aid thee, but I cannot do it.”

“ There is still one thing, my lord, that I would not abandon my hopes without proposing. It is hard to ask a bride to peril the man she loves, but, if it so please your lordship, I would be willing, if all else fails, to let it be tried by wager of battle.”

“ Daughter, daughter, it is all in vain ! the ban of excommunication deprives him of trial by either combat or ordeal.”

“ Then may Heaven pity us ! ” cried the wretched girl, clasping her hands upon her bosom to keep down the agony of her heart. She succeeded, after a painful struggle, and stood up with dry eyes but quivering lips to take her leave—“ Farewell, my lord ; I would beg your blessing ere we go.”

“ Bless you, my child ; God bless you ! Yet stay : ‘ ere we go,’ thou sayest : who is he, then, who awaits thee ? ”

“ My lord, I will not deceive you, and, if you urge me, I must answer truly ; but I would beg of your generosity not to ask that question.”

“ Then, I will not ask it,” said he with frank but

mournful assent ; “ I may be blameworthy in permitting his escape, but I cannot take advantage of thy sincerity. Go in peace, my daughter : I am well persuaded that if, as thou sayest, he be innocent, God will in His good time give him a sufficient means of proving himself to be so.”

Ellen turned towards the gate with a sense of insupportable wretchedness. She had lost all hope, for at that moment every trust in the presentiment of their approaching deliverance was gone ; and that presentiment had, so far, supported her. She would have been glad to sit down and weep, but she had to sustain *him* through his disappointment, and she thought that it would be poignant in proportion to the length of her protracted interview with the Archbishop. She found him pacing up and down the little green beyond the gates ; but his step was not by half so impatient as she had expected. He advanced to meet her, and it needed but a glance to tell him that the appeal had been unsuccessful. He took her hand and kissed her lips without a word : he hardly cared whether he should be discovered or not. They walked down, hand in hand, to the place where their horse was fastened to a tree, and a few broken sentences only passed between them. But Talbot bore all far better than she had hoped : he had left her, as she knelt, with full assurance that she would, throughout the interview, act in all things for the best : his indignation against himself, for leaving her to plead his cause alone, had ceased to agitate him ; he was now only anxious to let her know that he had felt it, and felt it no longer. All the thoughts that had passed through his mind while pacing up and down before the Abbey gate, had been of a character to calm and elevate ; for they took their tone from the occupation in which he had left her ; and he was now capable of viewing their prospects, bleak as they were, with a much loftier equani-

SER. III.

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mity than he had brought to their contemplation at any former crisis. He was the comforter and consoler as they rode back to Drogheda; for they had scarce ascended the hill above the monastery before Ellen's tears were flowing in uncontrolled grief. The shades of evening had now fallen on the late sunny landscape, and the contrast between the aspect of the country coming and returning, was not more saddening, than that between the past and present prospect of their darkening fortunes.

"Here, my princes," said Turlogh, "we must leave Ellen before the north gate of Drogheda, until we meet again."

"Will they get the pardon this bout, Art?—what say you?" asked Henry.

"Turlogh is too unmerciful a man to let them off so easily," said Art. The bard smiled.

"But, Turlogh," said Henry, "what is all this about Athcarne Castle in the year 1534? the place was built only two years ago by De Bath, who married a daughter of the Red Dowdall."

"Ah," said Turlogh, "you must make allowance, my princes, for some trifling errors. Athcarne, I confess, was but a castle in embryo in those days; your bard must in future be more exact, since he has to deal with critics who are antiquaries."

ELEVENTH NIGHT.

"WHAT can be the cause of Turlogh's delay?" said Art, as the captives awaited him next evening; "if he do not shortly make his appearance, I shall sit down myself, and invent a conclusion for the Story of Silken Thomas."

"And what sort of ending would you give him, my most ingenious brother?" asked Henry, with a smile.

"Oh, as for *Tomás-an-Teeda*, it was not of him I was thinking: but, to tell you the truth, I do grudge that poor fellow, Talbot, his wife: it is a great sin, but I can't help being quite in love with her, and I fear if I had the arrangement of their fortunes in my own hands, I should be tempted to make away with him on the first feasible opportunity, and pay my own addresses to the sweet young widow: she is too good by half for any man in the whole story."

"Not to speak of any of the story-teller's audience," replied Henry, laughing, "but, tell us, *Art, mo vouchall ghasta*, if you had won the widow for yourself, whither would you take her?"

"*Dar m' anim!* to Dungannon, to be sure, or to cousin Brian's, at Ballinderry: ah, ha! she was never further north than Dunleer: but I'd show her the hills beyond the pale: 'tis I would show her the high huntings and the feasts—bells of Patrick! I think I see myself sitting beside her in the *roomey more*, after a day's hawking over Drumcarnie or Derrymactaggart!—Turlogh harping on the hearthstone, and Phelimy Duff with the pipes beside the door: then, my gilly red-shanks, how they should bear about the Spanish wine in horns and *meathers*! But, I'll tell you what, there's one great drawback on my prospect, that I must confess to freely—she likes Talbot so well that, *Dar Kiaran*, I could hardly find in my heart to separate them: then, again, even if I were cruel enough to do so, do you know, I am not quite sure but that I might, after all, hardly make myself so amiable in her eyes as might be necessary before we could go down to the north pleasantly together."

"That is a difficulty, I confess," replied Henry, "and it seems to me that there is another obstacle in your way,



my romantic Sir Arthur; here be some fourteen feet of stone and lime between you and the road."

"What care I?" cried Art; "if I begin to tell you my tale, stone and lime shall fly like smoke from before me! Ah!" he added in a saddened tone, "here we are, talking of poor Ellen Dudley as if she was our own companion, and she dead and gone many a year ago; yet the green sod over her is no barrier to the fancy; and no more, dear Henry, are these walls of Dublin Castle:—poor Ellen, may the daisies grow upon her grave every day of the year!"

"Do you know, Art, how it is that she lives for us?" said Henry, in a changing tone; "they are living that she makes us think of. It is strange, but I dare be sworn it is true, that you have drawn a picture of Ellen with eyes as dark as night, while my fancy makes them blue as the sky upon an April morning."

"And you cannot but think it very strange that she should never have been so far north as the woods of Truagh," said Art; and it was now his turn to smile.

"No stranger, Art," replied his blushing brother, "then you must deem it that she should be the daughter of a churl Englishman, instead of the *inginni-Reilly*."

"Hear him, O'Donnell," cried Art; "he is striving to make you jealous of me: if we ever go down into Fergall, I shall show you how unjustly he charges me—but what is that you are drawing with the burnt stick?"

Hugh raised his head when thus addressed. He had been poring over some lines in charcoal on the hearth-stone:—"By my hand of valour," said he, "Lord Thomas was wrong to plant his battery in Preston's Inns; from the back of Saint Werburgh's he might have breached the long curtain with half-a-dozen salvos: the ditch on that side has not past three feet of clear ground at the rampart foot, and the rubbish of a breach of two yards over, would

fill it from scarp to counter-scarp, with need for neither fascine nor raft. If I ever come to see my friend, the Deputy, in his own bawn, it shall be from that side that I will batter the place."

"I pray you, if you ever do, O'Donnell," cried Art, at once joining in the young warrior's martial plans, but with more playful speculation, "if you ever do, O'Donnell, make your chief gunner throw one shot for my sake: there is a cursed chimney top that stands up there close before the window—*Dar Kiaran*, I might see the Three Rock Mountain every day of my life but for it!—lay one of your pieces against it, if you love my father's son; a single falconet would bring it down."

"It would be out of range," replied Red Hugh; "the tower stands between it and my battery: but when we take the place, I can have it pulled down."

"Do," cried Art, "and some poor fellow will bless you for it; for this room will have many an inmate yet, to whom the sight of the open hill will be as sweet as it would be to me if I could get it. My curse upon the chimney! may the mason that built it never lay a foot of work either plumb or level!"

"I'd rather than a month off my captivity that it was out of that!" exclaimed Henry; "still things are not so bad as they might be: thank my stars, we can still see a bit of the sky at this other side!"

"*Dioul!*" growled impatient Hugh, and cast a savage glance at their chains and round the stone-vaulted ceiling; but just as his indignation was bursting into words, the steps of the attendants were heard upon the stairs. The princes supped in their customary silence, until the warden and his men withdrew, then Turlogh, taking his seat by the red embers, proceeded on the common request without further delay.

THE REBELLION OF SILKEN THOMAS.

PART FOURTH.

By the time Sir John Talbot and his lady reached Drogheda, it was quite dark. The knight had a pass, procured that morning from the warden, in which he had described himself as one Master O'Regan, a civil Irishman of the pale, going with his wife on a pilgrimage to the foot of Saint Boyne's Cross, and on this they were admitted within the gates. Their silence and melancholy, thus accounted for, excited no surprise, and they gained the shelter they sought unquestioned. Both were sick at heart, for their disappointment had not only left them without hope of favour from man, but had even shaken that trust in higher aid, under the influence of which they had hitherto borne their sorrows meekly. No wonder, then, that Ellen's hand was cold in that of her husband as he aided her to dismount, and that, her face looked ghastly in the lamp light, as she sank shivering on the first seat their temporary home presented. All that affectionate care could suggest was done to cheer and relieve her, and for a while she rallied; but the trial had been more than mind or body could longer endure, and after a few days' unavailing effort to shake off the grasp of illness, she sank at last under the full force of severe and accumulated disease. For many weeks the wretched lady lay hovering between life and death in burning fever; and when at last, she was raised, by the pious and charitable care of the kind people into whose hands she had fallen, from that bed of sickness, she was so weak and shattered that it was impossible for her to leave the house in which this calamity had overtaken her.

The autumn had set in rainy and cold; the roads were flooded; the fords impassable, and the country swarmed with predatory bands let loose by civil war to aggravate the disasters of the season.

Talbot resolved to winter in Drogheda: they had no friends elsewhere; no motive to leave it but the advantage of warmer skies, and these they could not attain to without exposure to worse inclemencies upon the way. The bay was blockaded; they could not go by sea: the country swarmed with banditti, rendering an inland journey very hazardous: the rebel army under *Tomás-an-Teeda* himself had more than once threatened the walls, and Burnel still intercepted communication by the coast road with the capital. Those with whom they were quartered were worthy and well disposed, and Ellen's ill health made the care of a matron such as their landlady doubly valuable. But Ellen, although she partially regained her health and strength, seemed sunk in spirits almost irretrievably. It consumed her husband's heart with secret anguish to see month after month elapse and the same melancholy smile answer each morning's renewed expectation of happier looks, as her step gradually became firmer, and the dawn of returning bloom mantled on her pale cheek like the first faint blush of the sunrise. Still the tenderness of his care was unabated, and he flattered himself with bright hopes for both, when her health should be finally restored, and Ireland with its painful recollections, left far behind them; for he was resolved to seek a home in some sunnier and more peaceful clime, where their wealth (for he was not insensible of the value of the deposit held by the friendly merchant, Master Harvey,) might both procure all that their rank could make them wish to aspire to in state or luxury, and, at the same time, earn for them, by fit application, as much honour for piety in their new

character as they had already suffered reproach, however undeserved, by the Church's censure.

Autumn passed, and the chill blasts of winter kept the poor invalid almost constantly confined to the house. The country still suffered the inflictions of war ; the citizens of Drogheda were kept in constant apprehension, and rarely ventured beyond their walls unless in considerable numbers. Trade had ceased, for the merchants dared not risk their goods upon the roads, nor could the occasional messengers who travelled to Dublin, then in a state of siege, be depended on for the conveyance of money or letters. Talbot was satisfied to await the issue in patience, for he had as yet no need of any further advance from Master Harvey, whom he had already succeeded in apprising of his intended stay at Drogheda, and he was unwilling to expose himself to the chance of detection by attempting further communication. Still he was naturally anxious about the progress of the war, and mingled as eagerly as others in the crowd which surrounded each new comer from the scene of action.

There had been a dearth of intelligence for some weeks, when the arrival of a company of travellers before the south gate excited an unusual bustle. Talbot observing the concourse from his window, where he sat reading the legend of Saint Darerca to his wife, suddenly laid down the book—“Good news for my Nelly !” he cried ; “they have waggons with them, and pack horses—Dublin is relieved, or they had not dared to take the road with so much merchandize”—and he ran down to the market-place to hear the news.

“Yes, we are clear of those burs on our skirts at last ;” were the first words he heard from one of the new comers, who was addressing the citizens from the steps at the base of the High Cross : “I left a dozen of their best

men trying to make terms for the rascal crew as I came away."

"Terms!" cried another; "do the rebel dogs stand upon terms?"

"They would if they could," replied the first speaker; "but, in faith, the only terms our Recorder would entertain were little to their comfort. 'Give us a thousand pounds in hand, and five hundred pounds in wares,' said Lynch of the Knock. 'Enlarge our prisoners, and furnish us with munition and artillery,' said Field of Painstown. 'Write me a fair letter to the King for all our pardons, if we think fit to return to our allegiance,'" demanded Bath of Dolardstown. 'I'll tell you what, my masters,' quote Fitzsimon in reply, 'we would be loth to show a niggard spirit to gentlemen in trouble: we cannot, in good sooth, grant all you ask; but this we freely offer —while our scrivener's stock lasts, never want for good vellum parchment to engross your submissions on'—it would have made you laugh to see how blank the rascals looked."

"Ay, by Saint George," cried one of the bystanders, "and while there is a yarn in my rope walk, they need never go begging for halters."

"Set them up!" cried another; "gads were good enough for their betters: but I pray you, sir, how was it that you gave them the repulse?"

"Why," said the first speaker, "you all remember how we drove them out of their battery at Preston's Inns."

"What! after Master Herbert brought back that comfortable message from the King?"

"Just so: we had, as you perceive, agreed with the rebels to give them, as it were, the liberty of battering the castle within our walls."

"And when the King told you to keep a good heart, you rued the bargain?"

"You have hit it: we fell upon them that night; the gates were shut, and they had nothing for it but to take to the river. Some swam under the bridge and escaped, but most of them were, as you have heard, knocked on the head in their trenches, or drowned off the Merchants-quay."

"Which our Silken Lord could not, methinks, but take in a somewhat ill part?"

"You may well say so; he came up in three days after from Kilkenny, where he was preying the Butlers' country, vowing that he would not leave one stone in Dublin on another."

"That was before he battered the Castle out of Ship-street?"

"It was; and when White set fire to his quarters there, he shifted his guns to the end of Thomas-street, opposite the New Gate, and it was from that ground that we have beaten him now."

"Then, belike, he had given up his assault on the Castle?"

"He had: his fire had been turned on the town for the last ten days before yesterday."

"Oh, Sirs," said another merchant, standing by, "we, of the city have suffered a very hot siege; an apprentice of my own was shot as he was going to the high pipe for a jar of water, for they had dammed up all the conduits; he was a quiet and proper lad, and was within a month of being out of his apprenticeship. He was shot through the body—I give you my word he was, and died within the hour."

"Yes," said the first speaker, "many a good man has come home feet foremost in Dublin since this broil began;

but, my masters, I was telling you of the progress of the siege : where was I ? ”

“ At the charge upon the rebels in Thomas-street last night.”

“ No, the night before last ; but no matter. I’ll tell you how it was—Thomas-street, you perceive, lies without the town wall, stretching from the New Gate towards the Grey Friars and my Lord of Kildare’s Castle of Thomas Court ; and it was there that the arch traitor lodged during the siege. Now, what think you, did the rogues do, to shelter themselves from our shot ? Why, Sirs, they turned the poor inhabitants out of their houses on either side of the street, which was an abominable cruelty, and then beat down the partition between house and house, from one end to the other, so that they formed, as it were, two covered galleries the whole way from the New Gate to my Lord’s, or more rightly to speak, to the arch rebel’s own chief mansion. Then, Sirs, they fetch me forth their artillery, and plant me their battery right against the gates. Staunton, our warden of the post, plays his part like a good soldier, and returns them shot for shot. Ah ! my masters, what a sight it was to see the bolts leaping, and the oak splinters flying far and near, as every bullet came in through the planks with a crash ! Then to mark stout Dick Staunton, with his demi-cannon from the tower top, and the long culverin below, how he would beat down their sand bags and breastwork, and tumble their guns and carriages about, like nine pins on the green, not to speak of many a tall man laid low on both parts ; but of such sights, we have had enough to make a short description serve. And so, Sirs, they kept up the game, day after day, the gate still standing, though sorely shattered, and we of the city began to take a stouter heart, when we saw that Staunton so valiantly maintained the ground.

" At last we could perceive that their fire was manifestly slackening, and now it became apparent, that there were many there who would rather if they might have been upon our side of the wall, for the arrows their archery discharged were, many of them, headless, and did us no hurt; and one or two letters were shot in, in the dusk of the evening, telling us to be of good cheer, for that the writers served against us, not of their own will, but by constraint of that tyrannical arch-traitor, whose plans and devices they failed not to discover to us in good time for their effectual prevention. Now, Sirs, seeing what hollow hearts some of our adversaries bore in the quarrel, we began to meditate the sally; and shortly after came the present need that forced us to put our plan into execution, although, I confess, somewhat sooner than had been intended; for the enemy taking advantage of a slackening in Staunton's shot, brought store of fagots to the gate, and incontinently fired them. The wind was high, and drove the flames right into the archway, till Staunton and his men were so scorched and stifled that they could no longer stand to their guns. In this emergency we resolved to give the sally without further delay; so, crying that the King's army was landed, which was done the more to inspire our own men with courage, as well as to daunt the rebel, we rushed down to the number of four hundred, or thereabouts, to the gate. The gate was all on fire; above and below the flames were pouring in like a river, and bursting through every seam and shot hole; but the bolts were still fast. ' Throw open the gate, and let us come to handy blows,' was the cry on all sides, for our blood by this was up, and it galled us sorely to stand idle there among the smoke and flame, with the bullets crashing in between the blazing planks, for the rebels plied their fire and fagot to the last. ' Throw

open the gate, Dick Staunton, if you be a man!' said black George Harpool, who was our lieutenant, 'or if you be afraid of singeing your hose, give me the keys, and I will open it; for the warden had twice tried to make his way to the lock, but both times the flames so scorched his feet and legs, that he had to give back. Staunton flung him the keys, and Harpool jumped into the flame which was flowing in from under the gate, with a splash as if he had been leaping into a shallow pool of water. We all shouted, 'St. George,' but before he had well got the key in the key-hole, a shot came in under the lock, and tore away very nearly the whole of the poor fellow's side. He dropped with a horrible shriek, and left the key in the wards, and there was no man there would take it in hand after him. Fleming, of the Draper's Guild, ran forward and dragged him out of the fire by the heels; but he might as well have left him alone, for any thing he ever felt after the shot took him. We were all amazed at Staunton; for he was reputed the boldest man on the walls; and though the flames had made him dance, we thought he would surely have adventured it again; but we soon saw what he now intended, for he had been busy training round the culverin from its casement in the wall, and just as Harpool was carried off, he and his men came dragging it along the gallery, to the side door under the archway. 'Stand back, my masters,' cried Dick, levelling the piece right against the lock, the muzzle scarce six feet from the mark. 'Stand back, my masters, for I have here a pick-lock that goes roundly to work, and the more fire the better;' and at the word he clapped to the linstock. Away went lock and bolt, carried clean off the face of the timber, for the shot was made aslant, and the bullet, after breaking these off, lodged in the thickness of the plank, which it split asunder for two feet, I am

sure, and more. We all gave the Saint George and an huzza, then running down a heavy waggon by the shafts, we thrust it against the folds of the gate, for it opened to the outside ; and these giving way, bore back the fagots laid against them, which, tumbling into the ditch on either hand, left us a smoking passage for the charge, and out we went, wheeled the waggon to one side, and gave the onset over the red embers, and through the scattered brands of the fire !

" The Irish were amazed, and for the first minute clean confounded at the sight, which they as little expected as to see the gates of the pit thrown open at their feet, and a legion of the dwellers in its flames come to convey them to their fit habitation ; and, by my faith, I think we sent some few to their appointed places that evening, for we did execution on them for two hours and better, until we cleared both lanes from end to end, and drove their main battle before us as far as to Thomas Court. The arch rebel himself escaped, as I hear, to the Grey Friars, in St. Francis-street, where he lay that night, very penitent and crest-fallen, but joined his knaves next morning, and sent us these others, whom I told you of, to patch up a truce, if so they might, with our burghers. I left them making the attempt, and, if they get no better terms than Master Fitzsimon seemed disposed to grant them, they had as good hang themselves in their sword-belts out of hand."

" Well, Heaven be praised, the broil is nearly over," said the other merchant ; " but you, brother Eustace, are a proper man of war, and talk of guns and bullets as familiarly as I would of ell wands or ounce weights."

" Nay," replied the speaker, " I am a peaceful man ; but, brother Stephens, a man to prove his loyalty in such times as these, must take to his weapon now and again ;

and yet by the mass, when one's weapon is out, one would hardly wish to put it up without a stroke or two for manhood besides."

"If your worship," exclaimed one of the bystanders, "thinks three stabs at a dead kern enough to prove that a man is not a traitor, I would crave your favour for a poor gentleman whom I saw clapped in irons last night, on suspicion of high treason, though I once saw the same good loyalist nigh burst his girdle in defending the bridge gate against a company of *Tomás-an-Teeda's* men at arms: to be sure, he was somewhat late in bringing his falcon to bear, and it proved to be but a flag of truce after all, so that on the whole it was as well he did not fire; but, as I said, he did what was needful for an alderman."

"You are a prating knave," replied the merchant, "and shall not travel in my company again. Come, brother Stephens, let us to our hostelry."

"By your hand of valour, your worship," said the other; but as he spoke his cloak was plucked by Talbot, who motioned him aside in great agitation. "Did you mean Master Harvey?" he said; "did you say it was he whom you saw arrested for high treason?"

"By all that is wonderful," again exclaimed Peter, for it was he, in great amazement, "it is himself sure enough —why, master O'Regan, it was to see you I came to Drogheda."

"Speak out then, Sir; what of Master Harvey?"

"Your nobleness will be grieved to hear that he is in trouble; he is a close prisoner in Birmingham Tower. He has been taken up on a charge of high treason."

"High treason! why, death and perdition, Sir; there is not a more loyal man in Ireland!—what proof is there against him?"

"No one knows for certain; but it is thought that Talbot—he who murdered the Archbishop——"

"It is false, Sir; I—I—I say, Sir John Talbot never raised a hand to Archbishop Alan!"

"What a choleric people these mere Irish are!" exclaimed Peter, drawing back in alarm; "I pray you, Master O'Regan, remember I need no more experience to vouch for your strength of arm; by my head, I was but telling you what people say commonly in Dublin; as for Talbot, why staff of Patrick! I heard him excommunicated for the Bishop's murder, and I do not set myself up as wiser than my clergy."

"Well, well—no matter, Sir; you said you came here to look for me?"

"I did, Master O'Regan; I came on an errand from Dublin; to give this letter into your hands." As he spoke he drew forth a packet, addressed to Master O'Regan, in a hand which Talbot at once recognised as that of the good merchant. The letter had been written previous to his misfortune; it was in reply to Talbot's first communication, and contained an order on one of the wealthiest citizens of Drogheda for a further sum, should the knight require it, on the security of his jewels. "Why, sirrah, there is nothing here of accusation or arrest;" he cried, turning on the messenger; "take care how you trifle with me: by my hand, if I find that you have been deceiving me—although I wish from my heart you may—but, speak out, man, and tell me all you know about the matter: how came you by the letter, and who told you that Master Harvey was arrested?"

"He hired me, Master O'Regan, to carry the letter to you, and he had hardly put the seal to it, when in came the Town Major and his men, and seized upon him."

"Good Heaven!—And with what did they charge him?"

"They only said he must go with them. I never saw a man so amazed in all my life: he insisted they were under some mistake. 'Why, gentlemen, I am Martin Harvey,' the poor man would say, over and over, as if he thought his name was too good for any but an honest man: and by my head, I think he is an honest man, and I never pitied poor gentlewoman more than I did his wife. She had a little boy running at her knee, not over six years old, and when they dragged the honest man away, it would have made the tears come to your eyes to have seen her taking the infant in her arms, and following them all the way to the Castle gate—house and warehouse left open to the street: but, i' faith, the Major's men took proper care of the goods for her. I saw them carrying out drawers and strong boxes by the cart-load."

"Death and perdition! it is open robbery!—did the villains dare to plunder the drawers of a man whom nothing had been proved against?"

"Why, Master O'Regan, of course a good deal must have been plundered in removing so many books, papers, cabinets, and the like, as I saw them carry away: but the Major's orders, as I heard, were, to have all brought to a room in the Castle, where they were to be sealed up till the trial should come on."

"Peter, I am a ruined man!"

"And so, I fear, is poor Master Harvey."

"And I have been the cause. By Heaven, I think it is the curse that is on me! By the faces of the saints, I have not deserved this!"

"The curse that is on you, Master O'Regan!"

"Well, Sirrah, what of that?" Sir, do you dare to look inquisitively at me?"

"What mean you?" I do not understand your nobleness?"

"Then, Sir, thank God for your ignorance. You do not understand my nobleness: you look, Sir, as if you fain would; but I tell you that it would be better for you had you never been born, than to be like those who do understand me. Come to me, Sirrah, at Master Boylan's, the taverner's hard by Saint Margaret's, in an hour, and I will give you something you will have less difficulty in understanding. And I say, Sirrah, do not be surprised if I talked somewhat strangely; for I am passionate, Sir, very passionate. By the bright heaven, if I went mad it would not be surprising!" He turned away, and Peter, uttering his wonted ejaculation, gazed after him till he was out of sight; then, shaking his head, walked down to the river side in great perplexity.

In somewhat less than an hour after this Talbot entered his apartment: "Ellen," said he, "we must leave Drogheda to-night: do not think it unkind of me to be so abrupt: we have not an hour to lose: In two days from the present time I shall be known here."

She turned deadly pale; but rose without a moment's hesitation, and began to prepare for the road: "I am ready, love," she said; "I have long been expecting it; and now, that the necessity has come, I am thankful that I am so much better able to bear it: is the danger imminent?"

"Thank Heaven we still have time for escape, but nothing more. Ellen, I had a letter to-day from Master Harvey."

"Warning you to fly?"

"No; sending his order on Master King for a further supply of money."

"Alas, what is money without safety! We had enough until we should see him again."

"I fear, Ellen, we shall never see him again—I fear

that money will be the last we shall ever receive at his hands."

"John dear, tell me the worst at once; believe me, I can bear it; what has happened? how are we in danger of discovery?"

"Harvey, Ellen, has been arrested for high treason: all his goods are seized to the state: the jewels are gone!"

"Well, love, we have already borne worse than honest poverty together."

"God bless you for ever, my own dearest!—Yes; we are nearly beggared: and now that I have told you the worst, a great weight is taken off my heart."

"But this, dear John, is not the worst: what of your own danger?"

"We shall escape it, Ellen, the suspicions of the merchant on whom this order is drawn, have been, I know not how, excited; and I fear my hand-writing on the receipt will be known in Dublin, whither he goes, post-haste, this evening. I confess I dread detection if we remain longer in Drogheda."

"Then let us go, love: all places are alike to me, while we are together."

"Thank Heaven that this, at least, is rescued. Had I been half an hour later in asking payment, we should have had nothing left beyond the moiety of our last hundred pieces," and the knight, as he spoke, showed a heavy bag of gold, the sum he had received on Harvey's order.

"We are not, then, after all, so destitute," said Ellen; "but now that I think of the poor Harveys, I fear they will be left in great misery if all their possessions have been, as you tell me, seized by the crown?"

"Ay, poor Martin had little expectation of what was

so soon to befall himself, when he sent this timely aid to us. By my honour, Ellen, I think we should send part back to Mistress Harvey."

"Dear John, that is just what I should myself have said; do let us divide with her." A portion of their scanty means was set aside accordingly, and the generous pair, when they put up the remainder in the saddle-bags that now held their whole worldly substance, felt more satisfaction of heart than if their unshared wealth had loaded ten sumpter horses.

But where were they to find a messenger whom they could safely trust with such a sum? A kind heart should be an honest one. Rude as the man was, poor Peter's voice had trembled when he came to tell of the misery of Harvey's family. "Come hither, knave," said Talbot, as he came forth, with his wife leaning on his arm, to the courtyard, where Peter stood, holding one of their horses; "you said," he continued, drawing him a little aside, "that poor Mistress Harvey was left in great distress by this misfortune?"

"And well I might, Master O'Regan: I question if they have left her a bed to lay her head on."

"I have some money here, Peter; that is, more than I shall need myself for the present: I would fain have it sent to the poor gentlewoman: will you take in hand to carry it to her?"

"By my bones and body," cried the man, "these mere Irish have the true heart after all!—I will carry her the money, Master O'Regan, as safely as a lone man may. By the staff of Patrick, she shall receive every penny, an' it were a thousand pound: but God's mercy, your nobleness, are you bound on a long journey, that I see you make such preparation?"

"Ask no questions, Sirrah, but take this for your own

share, and let no grass grow under your feet till you have done your errand." So saying, he dismissed him with an ample gratuity, and, in another half hour, was riding with his wife out of the south gate, apparently for Dublin. But at the first turn of the road, they struck off in the direction of the fords above the town, and, traversing the open country, recrossed the Boyne, and headed northwards. That night they lay at Mellifont; the next day saw them riding through the wilds of the Fews, and another housed them in their destination, inside the walls of Armagh. Talbot had chosen this spot for their retreat, as, in case of the worst, he had but to cross the Blackwater to get into a country where the fulminations of an English churchman were as little regarded as the writ of an English King; and, in the meantime, by remaining within the Pale, he had an opportunity of learning occasionally the progress of affairs at the capital, a subject of deep interest to him, as on the conviction or acquittal of Harvey depended the sole chance, slight as it was, but still not altogether abandoned, of recovering any part of their property. But months passed and there was no news of the imprisoned merchant. Ellen's health continued very uncertain; and a settled melancholy defied all the tenderest efforts of her husband for its removal: she struggled against it with patient fortitude, but the cause of her wretchedness lay deeper in her heart than the meek spirit of endurance with which she sought to overcome it; and she had at last to give up the contest, and confess to her husband the secret of her grief.

They were sitting by their hearth one evening, towards the end of winter: they had been talking mournfully together, till the fire was half sunk under white ashes at their feet, and the light from the few red embers that remained was just enough to show that they were alone.

Ellen's head rested on his breast, for she was sick at heart, and needed his support: both had been silent for a few minutes, and, as Talbot listened to the storm without, his imagination, on wings as swift as the winds, had transported him back to the time when he had once lain with a troop of gallant companions on just such a night, before the castle of Birr, with no better bed than the platform of their battery, and no other protection from wintry skies than a soldier's cloak; yet happy as light hearts and anticipated victory could make them. He remembered how each had pledged his last cup of wine to some loved name, and what bright visions had passed before his eyes as he had drunk to his Ellen—and could it be that all had ended thus? outlawed, beggared, and with scarce an hour's respite from sorrow; for even as he sat he felt her tears falling warm on his breast, where she lay silent in his arms, but weeping with the bitterness of despair. "Ellen, love, Ellen, it kills me to see you so miserable! What is it that keeps you in such constant affliction? Tell me, dearest, have you any cause of sorrow that I do not know of? If I could how willingly I would lay down my life to remove it."

"No, love, no: I have no secret from you," she replied; but her tears still flowed fast and uncontrolled.

"Then tell me, Ellen, why is it that you suffer so much more than I do? This constant indulgence in grief will kill you; you ought not to yield to it—indeed you ought not."

"I know—I know I ought not; but I cannot help it. Dear John, do not be angry with me; you cannot know what I feel when I think of all that is before me."

He acknowledged the full force of the allusion, and, kissing her lips tenderly, said, "Ellen, love, forgive me: God forbid that I should be angry with you, or forget

how doubly dear we soon are to be to one another; but keep up your heart, love, all will yet be well. Indeed, instead of a cause of dread, this alone, in all our sorrows, has been to me a subject of joyful expectation."

"Oh, it is not that—it is not that!"

"Gracious Heaven, Ellen! what then can it be?"

"Do you remember," she said, sinking her head lower on his breast, and speaking in still sadder tones, "do you remember what your kinswoman said to me that day in St. Patrick's church?"

"What, Dame Keating? the poor superstitious woman! I do remember her telling you what heartless bigots might call us; and I remember your reply—that, let the world call us what it would, we were man and wife in the sight of God, and should continue so."

"But,"—and her voice almost sank to a whisper,—"but she said something else; and, John dear, I have never been able to banish it from my mind."

"Why, what could the foolish woman say that should have such influence over you?"

"She said, and I have never forgotten it, and, till justice is done us, I never can forget it—she said that my baby would be born with the curse upon its head—and that no priest could ever christen it!"

This thought renewed her grief, and she lay on his breast, weeping as if her heart would break; then her hands, which had been held in his, were gradually withdrawn, and she folded her arms round his neck silently, but with a supplicating tenderness that needed no words.

"Ellen," he said, "I will try again."

She raised her head, and, resting it higher on his bosom acknowledged the almost un hoped-for boon with a tender caress, and with murmured thanks, that were half-inarticulate from feeling scarce yet subdued—

"I will make another effort for your sake, Ellen," he continued, "I will go myself to some churchman and tell all: I should rather bear the worst they could inflict than see you suffering thus much longer. I was indeed a coward not to have done this sooner. Ellen, if I thought you could bear the journey, I would start for Templemore to-morrow: a convention of prelates is held there, among whom it will go hard if I cannot find some one that will listen to the truth. My father was a friend of the Bishop of Meath, and he and Cromer are both at Templemore."

"Dear John, I could bear the journey quite well," she replied, drying her tears, and striving to speak more steadily; "we could go by easy stages; indeed I think I should be much the better for change of scene. And you know," she resumed, "we are not bound to remain here; we could await the result of this charge against Master Harvey as well at Templemore or Cashel as at Armagh; the weather, too, is by no means severe, and, now that that unhappy gentleman Lord Thomas has gone into Connaught, the roads will be safe. Did you not say that all his troops in Leinster are shut up in garrison, while he has the main army with him beyond the Shannon?"

"It is so, indeed; and now I hear that Skeffington, our new Lord Deputy—he whom they call William the Gunner—has landed. Lord Thomas's rebellion will soon be suppressed."

"But has he not still a great army, and many castles?"

"Should O'Connor, as they report, have joined him, his army will be a powerful one; and his garrisons certainly hold the six strongest castles in Leinster. Ley alone, in the heart of O'Moore's country, is able to stand a six-months' siege of the deputy's forces; then there are

Rathangan and Portlester, and above all, Maynooth, which they say Lord Thomas has fortified so strongly, that he has made it impregnable."

"Ah! does *he* command there still?"

"What, Parez? Yes: the villain remains yet unhang'd. I hear he has a choice garrison; but I believe they keep close to their walls."

"Surely there would be no danger that we should fall into his hands?"

"None: we should hold our way clear both of Rathangan and Maynooth."

"Then, dear John, let us start to-morrow: I can bear the fatigue. You could not leave me behind; and I am sure I should rather travel a hundred miles than live another day, without making some effort to avert the misery I so much dread."

"Why did you not tell me sooner, dear Ellen, the cause of your distress, that I might try to relieve it?"

"Alas! I can scarce tell why; I had hoped that every day would bring us some change for the better, and I hardly thought that you would wish to make so hazardous an attempt a second time; and indeed I feared you would think my apprehensions groundless and unworthy of serious attention; for I know how little, in comparison with me, you regard the Church's censure."

"Indeed, dear Ellen, what I regard most now is your peace of mind, and whatever makes you unhappy is important to me. I know you cannot shake off this dread, superstitious as it may be, or you would have done so; therefore, dear Ellen, we will bid farewell to Armagh to-morrow, and take our chance of getting safely to Templemore, where, I trust, our suit may speed better than it did at Monasterboyce."

"God grant it," she replied, in a tone of more cheerful

reliance than he had heard from her lips since the evening she had pleaded his cause at the foot of Murdach's cross.

And now our wanderers were once more on the road, and a single horse was again their whole equipage; but Glundhu was a strong and high mettled steed, capable of bearing his double burthen more swiftly than Talbot's care for his wife would have permitted. They left the city and soon overtook a company of merchants going southward; and as the slow progress of the sumpter horses suited the pace at which they wished to proceed, they took advantage of their numbers, and thus made their way as far as Kells in safety, and with ease; but here their convoy struck off for Dublin, while their road lay through the heart of Meath and Kildare, and, accordingly, from Kells they were obliged to journey on alone.

The first day of their solitary travelling passed without interruption or accident, and they fixed upon Raheen as the termination of their next stage. They had now left the borders of Meath, and were journeying on through a less cultivated country, and Talbot had prepared Ellen to expect ruder scenery; for, to avoid the dangerous vicinity of the rebel garrisons, they had to take the more westerly road, and this led through a succession of woods and bogs, gradually growing wilder, until, about sunset, they found themselves on a narrow bridle-path, threading a valley that stretched away before them in interminable woods and thickets, unbroken by the slightest mark of human habitation, and Raheen was still some five miles ahead. The sun had set, and the outline of the high grounds on their right showed dark, and clearly defined against the red horizon. Both involuntarily turned their eyes from the shadowy valley, through which they rode, to

gaze on the parting radiance. "It is like our hopes," said Ellen, mournfully.

"I would it were," replied Talbot; "they should then be bright again to-morrow; but why so mournful, Ellen?"

"My heart," she said, "is weighed down, why, I know not: it sank with the sun, I think—I never so dreaded the approach of night before."

"It is but fancy, dear Ellen; we have nothing to fear from the darkness; our path, if not broad, is well beaten. I have travelled the road before."

"These woods look wild and impassable; if we strayed into them we should be lost."

"But we cannot stray; I could feel my way, if the night were blacker than the dungeons of Strancally; and, as for the woods, they were scoured of wolves within a month; yet, though they be safe in that respect, they are, it is true, impassable for us; but we take the beaten track in the slack of the hill, beyond that ridge of bare land that rises out of the wood before us; you cannot see the gap from this, but it lies yonder where the hill dips on the skirt of the broken ground."

"And that is the only pass to Raheen?"

"The only one, unless we turn back to Killmacmahon, and take the out road to Screen and Athadhu."

"Ah, that would be a long way. You will think me very weak to yield to fears that I cannot define; but I do not like this road: I wish we were past the gap,"

"By Saint Magrady, I wish so too!" cried Talbot, fixing his eyes anxiously on a point of the hill to their right, where its outline was most sharply marked against the lingering belt of sunset.

"Dear John, what do you see?" cried Ellen, in accents of alarm.

"Nothing, love," he replied; "it was nothing; but we must make haste, or it will be midnight ere we reach Kilkea. Do you think, love, you could ride a little faster?"

"Oh, ride as fast as you desire; I can bear whatever must be done, for I am sure there is danger near us. Tell me, I entreat you, what is it that you see upon the hill?"

"I think it was but the tree tops over the ridge that I could not make out at first. Come, Glendhu, you must taste the spur; we have no time to loiter."

"Tree-tops!" repeated Ellen, straining her eyes to the verge of the horizon; "they are moving and rising! there—under the pink cloud—look, look, I see spears and banners, and they come this way!"

"There is indeed a force of horse," replied the knight, no longer trying to conceal the cause of his anxiety: "but till they top the hill I cannot tell whether Irish or Saxon. We, however are safe here in the hollow; they cannot see us while we keep here in the shadow. Ah! there, I have their head-pieces between me and the light; they are Irish; I know them by their high helmets; ay, no doubt they are Irish; there, we have their whole army on the ridge of the hill; you can see from their seats, that they ride without the stirrup. Strike out, Glendhu! I would not for the best cantred in Meath, fall into their hands!"

"Saints protect us!" exclaimed Ellen, "do you dread violence from them?"

"If I had a battle of my own galloglass at my back, Ellen, I should care no more for their foray than for a rabble of horse-boys; but alone, I would give a month of my life to be through Barnsbeg before them."

"Dear John, can we not wait here in the shelter of the wood, and let them pass the gap first?"

"No; for the plundering dogs—and I am sure they are MacCoghlan's men preying the Pale—will leave the gap guarded; it is their practice; they always do so. We must either get before them, or go back by Kilmac-mahon."

"Ah! that were a long delay; but surely we are so much nearer the pass that we cannot fail to gain it first."

"I should not fear for that, Ellen; but observe that bare ridge before us; we must cross it to reach the pass; and, by the time we shall have gained the ridge of the hill, these knaves will be in the hollow, where they will see us against the sky, just as we now see them. We should then have to ride hard to escape pursuit, and I fear, love, you could ill bear such a flight."

"Oh! do not fear for me; I can ride as hard as you will. But, sweet Mother, protect us! they are coming down the hill. Spur on, dear John, or they will overtake us."

"My bitter curse upon them!" cried Talbot, as he gave the spur to Glendhu, and sprang out from the low gorge of the valley upon the side of the exposed eminence, holding round the hill as low as the broken ground permitted, and stooping level with his horse's neck as they passed clump of furze or brushwood that concealed their ascent. At last the bare top of the ridge lay before them.

"Now, then," said Talbot, "here we run the gauntlet; but I'd rather than the best prey MacCoghlan ever drove, that this sun had set in the blackness of thunder-clouds. If we be seen, hold fast, for we must put Glundhu to his speed. Once through the gap, we are safe, for the country is open on both sides—we shall have the shelter

of night go where we will; so, in the name of Saint Magrady, we will make the venture!" He dashed on as he spoke; but, before Glundhu had made more than the third bound, the woods behind rang with the shout that told them they were seen and pursued by the Irish horsemen. Ere the first echo had died away, Talbot was driving the spurs heel-deep into his horse; but every step down-hill plunged them deeper in darkness; and although the path was well beaten, and the steed both strong and sure-footed, it needed all his skill to hold the horse up as they headed on at the top of his speed for the gap, now less than a quarter of a mile ahead. He was prepared for a determined pursuit, should he be observed, for he well knew that such marauders as he had to deal with were even more anxious to secure the persons of gentry in the Pale than their property; since they had levied heavy ransoms on people of distinction, captured in like incursions. And now he was almost certain of escape. "Bear up, love," he cried, "another minute, and we are safe!" But the words were hardly spoken when the cries of those behind were answered by a shout from the gorge of the pass in front. They were then intercepted; further flight was useless. With a heart full of rage, Talbot drew up, and turning his horse's head, faced his pursuers. "Who are ye?" he exclaimed in Irish, as they came on at headlong speed through the twilight—"Who are ye that would run down a free gentleman on the highway like a wild dog in the woods? Sons of rude fathers, what would you with me. I am travelling on my own charges; why seek ye to intercept me?"

"Your nobleness's company, that's all," answered the foremost of the party, catching at his rein. "*Dar Padruig!* you ride fast to carry double; come out into the

light, Sir Knight, and let us have a sight of your *ban-tierna's* face."

"Dog!" cried the knight, forgetting his assumed character, and speaking in English, "do you dare to look insolently at my lady?" and with his hand, he dealt him, at the word, a buffet that tumbled him from his saddle, with a clang as if a horse-load of iron had been thrown to the ground. Ere the enraged galloglass regained his feet, Talbot had unsheathed his weapon, and would have given desperate battle, but ere his arm was extricated from Ellen's grasp—for she strove, with frantic efforts, to prevent his unavailing resistance—and before his antagonist had yet gathered himself up for a second encounter, the leader of the party, with about a score of his men, came thundering down the hill.

"Hold!" he cried, checking his horse when he had charged in between the combatants; "did I not command you, villains, to take him without violence? Stand back, Tieg Sheridan! by my head, and by my father's head, if you strike a blow after that word you die the death!—Rickard Tyrrell, secure the prisoner, and bring him to our post. I am sure it is he we seek and no other."

Talbot rendered up his sword, and such papers as he carried, and they all proceeded towards the gap. "If I thought they were MacCoghlan's men," he whispered to Ellen, "I should tell them the truth; for they care little for the thunders of the Church, when fulminated by a Saxon; but I misdoubt them—they are over civil for mere Irish."

"Ah!" she cried, "they know us—I am sure they do—but, for the love you bear me, give them fair words."

"The colleen is *Sassenagh*," said one of the galloglass; "she talks to him in English; I knew from the first it was he"

"Who?" cried Talbot, "whom do you take me for? Who are ye yourselves?"

"Silence!" cried the captain from the front, "hold no communication with your prisoner, but bring him on."

They rode forward in silence and uncertainty, until a turn of the road among the rocks of the pass brought them on a watch-fire, surrounded by a picket of Irish horsemen—the same from whom they had heard the answering shout that stopped their flight on the other side of the defile. By this light the leader of the newcomers perused the papers taken from Talbot. He smiled as he read the name inserted in the fictitious passport, and cast the document contemptuously into the flames; but the letter from Master Harvey he carefully re-folded, and deposited in his doublet. He then called one of the troopers, whose face the knight could not see, a little aside, into the shadow, and Talbot heard him ask, in a low tone, "Are you sure?"

"I should know them in a hundred," was the answer; and the captive knight thought he recognised the voice, but when or where he had heard it, he could not imagine.

"Enough," replied the captain, and proceeded, as it appeared, to give orders for his prisoner's disposal. The knight and his lady awaited the issue of this strange adventure in mixed wonder and alarm. They were evidently known, but by whom neither could surmise. The dress and arms of those around did not distinguish them in any way from the ordinary soldiery of the Irish; and these, at that time, were engaged under so many independent leaders, and in so many conflicting feuds and quarrels, as to make it impossible to guess whether they were for the King, *Tomás-an-Teeda*, or some of the native chieftains, equally disposed to serve for, or against either royalist or rebel cause.

Their uncertainty was destined to continue ; for in a few minutes a covered horse-litter was brought from the remote quarter of the little encampment, and both prisoners quietly but authoritatively compelled to enter it ; the curtains were then drawn and fastened, and without a word from their escort to indicate the course they were to pursue, they started on their new and compulsory journey.

Talbot at first directed his whole attention to the bearing of their route, as he gathered it from each turn of the road ; but this at length became so circuitous as to baffle his closest powers of observation. Total darkness had set in, and the continued sound of the wind among the trees indicated a closely wooded country ; but farther surmise he could not gather, from any circumstance, of their situation. Hope of escape, more than once, crossed his mind ; but, although he might easily himself have sprung from the litter, and have had a chance of striking down the kern that ran beside, and making his way through the horsemen that rode around, yet it was impossible that he could bear Ellen through such a band, even favoured as they were by the darkness, and the nature of the surrounding country. There was nothing for him, then, but patient expectation of the result, and such endeavours to console her as his anxiety would permit him to make. Each, indeed, sought to relieve the apprehensions of the other by every fond suggestion that affection could devise ; but both, at the same time, were struggling with fears to which neither dared to give utterance.

They journeyed on, sleepless, and hour after hour flew by ; still they kept travelling on through woods and over rivers ; their horses' feet now scarce heard on the soft turf, now ringing on beaten roads, and anon splashing through the waters of the fords that crossed their way. Talbot,

again and again, tried to form some idea of the direction they were taking, but the sky was black overhead, and he could distinguish neither moon nor star. He lay back, praying for the morning to show him that they were not taking the way he dreaded. Alas! the first blush of dawn came from the quarter that confirmed his worst fears. Day broke, and presently the sun rose red and broad before them. They were, then, travelling eastward; and when the knight tore open the curtain of the litter and looked forth, the broad plains of Kildare and Dublin lay many a mile ahead. The whole landscape was glistening in the dewy light of sunrise; blue hills bounded the horizon on either hand, but before them the rich champaign extended unbroken to the level sky-line, and there, full against the red orb itself, like some black gigantic sentinel before the gates of day, stood the great tower of a castle, dusk, huge, and half obscured in the very radiance it intercepted. "It is the Keep of Maynooth!" exclaimed the wretched knight, and dropped his head upon his hands in despair.

"John, dear John," cried Ellen, "is there no hope of escape?"

"None, none. I fear, Ellen, we have a hard trial before us."

"John, John," she exclaimed wildly, "you must not trust yourself in the hands of him who commands in yonder castle. If you enter Maynooth you are lost!"

"It is not for myself I fear," rejoined Talbot; "but, Ellen, if these accursed gates be closed on us, God only knows what is to become of you!"

"Nothing that I shall not be able to bear for your sake," she replied with momentary resolution, and one flash of virtuous defiance crossed her features as she added—"and nothing unworthy of my father's daughter:" but appre-

Tension soon returned, and when next she spoke it was in broken accents of mixed prayer and lamentations; but Talbot took her hand in his, and with the mournful firmness of a brave man when he sees his whole danger, and knows it to be inevitable, addressed her—"Ellen," he said, "if they take us thither, we must prepare for the worst: and if it be God's will that we part so soon—do not weep, love, or you will unman me, and I have need of all my manhood now—still, Ellen, though we have been but a short time together, and that in shame and trouble for the most part, we have been happy while it lasted, and if we must part to-day we are bound to be satisfied with the good we have had, and not to repine at coming ills, which neither of us can prevent. If they take me from you, Ellen, God only knows what is to become of you—of you"—he added, and his voice shook a little—"or—of ours! But this I can bequeath to you:" he continued recovering his firmness; "your husband never did the crime they charge him with: I am innocent of Alan's blood, I am an honest man; let that be my child's inheritance, though my head should lie upon the block within the hour!" She would have said she never, never doubted his innocence, but she could not speak. "Yes, Ellen, my days on earth may be numbered, my enemies may end them ignominiously if they will; they may part us now," he repeated, "but we shall meet again where there will be no more partings, no more false accusers; let us comfort ourselves with this assurance, and preserve our trust in God."

At this moment a considerable stir was perceived among the escort—"Spur on, *mo vouchalee*," cried the leader, "and do you, Tieg Sheridan, come hither; you have the sharpest eye amongst us: what take you yonder smoke beyond the bawn to be?"

"*Dar Padruig*, I have been gazing till my eyes are dazzled, and cannot make out whether it be a mist over the Ryewater or the smoke of fires; but if that bit of cloud had once covered the sun, I could shortly tell your nobleness."

"*Ababoo!*" interrupted the leader, "there goes a shot from the top of the tower!—as I live by bread, Parez has the English in sight."

At the sound of their enemy's name the captives could not but start; for although they knew that he commanded in Maynooth, his name had not yet passed the lips of either Talbot or his wife. They might have hoped that some turn of good fortune had sent him elsewhere. This last illusive hope, if indeed it could be called a hope, was now gone.

"Ply whip and spur," cried the leader of the escort, "spur on, *mo hoga*, or we shall be cut off from the gates!"

"Spur, spur!" responded the voice of the second speaker; "I see it now, and *dar dioul vor!* it is no mist, but the dust of William the Gunner's column advancing from Castleknock!"

"Thank Heaven!" cried Ellen, clasping her hands, and looking up with eyes, through all their tears, beaming with gratitude for the hoped-for deliverance; but Talbot sighed to remember that his disguise could be of no avail in the royalist camp, and that at best he had but the chance of choosing between two executioners. Still he drew open the curtains once more, and surveyed the situation with as much firmness as a man in such a crisis might be expected to show. They were now within less than a mile of the Castle, which towered majestically from above the wilderness of tree tops out of which it rose like an insulated rock from the sea. At about half that distance on the other side the standards of a body of troops

were visible over a small unwooded elevation on the north-east. But these seemed rather an advanced guard than a main army, for they had halted out of range from the walls, and appeared either to wait an answer to a summons of surrender or the arrival of reinforcements. Taking advantage of their delay, the Irish troopers pressed on as rapidly as the safe conveyance of their prisoners admitted, and succeeded in gaining the esplanade, in front of the castle barbican, without danger or delay.

Talbot again looked forth : they had halted on the edge of the broad ditch over which, a little before them, the drawbridge hung suspended from the jambs of the main gateway. Right opposite stood an English officer, attended by his trumpeter and standard bearer, with a guard of horse : he was parleying with the warden : that functionary appeared upon the battlemented parapet above, and, at a glance, the knight recognised his old enemy.

"Go back to your master," were the first words they heard Perez speak, and Ellen shuddered to hear his hateful voice ; "go back to William the Gunner, and tell him that we hold this castle for a better man than ever sat in Henry Tudor's saddle ; and that if he dares to advance his standard nearer to these walls, we shall send our answer to his summons in terms somewhat more familiar to his base-born ears, than words of gentlemen," and so saying he withdrew.

"Gramercy for your condescension," replied the Englishman, "and though I would be loth to strain your courtesy, yet will I crave the use of all your ears again. In the name, then, of the illustrious and invincible Prince Henry, eighth of that name, by the grace of God, King of England, France, and Scotland, and Lord of Ireland, I summon you a second time to render up this his Majesty's castle of Maynooth, to the right honourable Sir William

Skeffington, Knight, his Majesty's Lord Deputy for this his kingdom of Ireland; and I hereby offer his highness's gracious pardon to all such of his misguided subjects, as being now in arms against the royal authority, will, within the space of one hour from this proclamation, lay down their rebellious weapons and supplicate the royal clemency."

"Keep your liberal offers for a dear year, Master Captain," replied one of the Irish from the wall.

The Englishmen seemed not to hear this and other taunts repeated from the battlements, but after a short space again proceeded to repeat the summons for a third time, offering free pardon, protection, and reward to all who would return to their allegiance; but he was as unsuccessful as before. "Write home our commendations to your friends," said one. "Come and keep your Christmas with us," said another. "*Dar lamh mo choirp,*" cried a third, "you are a good fellow, and if you will but take service with *Tomás-an-Teeda*, I would not matter advancing you to the battle-axe in my own company."

"Ellen!" cried Talbot in an impressive whisper, and suddenly seizing his wife's hand, but without withdrawing his eyes from their earnest examination of the embrasure from which the last reply was given—"Ellen! we need not despair—that was the voice of a friend."

"Mother of Mercy, who? where?"

"He who spoke last—from the embrasure—in the near tower: it is Art Mac Connogher; I should know his voice in a thousand: he will never see me shown such foul play as we dreaded; but speak low, Ellen, and subdue your agitation. Heaven grant he may have the old troop with him!"

"Lower away the drawbridge," the voice of Perez was now heard commanding, "Adieu Master Captain; you

have your answer : here are some friends of mine on the edge of the fosse that I would rather talk with just now."

The English troop wheeled off the ground ; the bridge descended ; the captives were again in motion ; the ditch resounded with the tramp of their horses' hoofs upon the timber ; the low-browed entrance reverberated their sharper clang on the stone pavement : the portcullis thundered to the ground with a grating clash behind—and daylight burst upon them again as they found themselves in the midst of an armed and eager multitude in the inner ballium of Maynooth. Talbot leaped from the litter, and lifted his wife to the ground. The rude soldiery stood back, for they had not yet received any orders for their disposal ; and the sight of poor Ellen, clinging to her husband's arm, pale, trembling, and soon to be a mother, moved every heart with compassion ; Talbot's bearing, too, was manly, without defiance, and they could not but regard him with reluctant respect. They stood in a circle round the captives ; while the leader of their escort turned to meet his commander as he descended from the barbican.

" You have done your duty well, Master O'Madden. I see you have secured the wretched man, as I directed," said Perez, advancing with a countenance on which his passions worked with strange effect ; for, while he struggled to seem gravely severe, his features writhed with malicious triumph. " You met him," he proceeded, " as we had reason to expect, beyond Barnsbeg ? "

" I did so, please your nobleness : it was well your messenger arrived in time, else I might have left the pass unguarded ; but, as it was, he was taken as if in a trap."

" I suppose he thought himself safe in his disguise," said Perez. " Ah, ha ! I have tracked him to his earth at last. Teig Sheridan, take your prisoner to the massey

mor; let the lady, that is, let his companion be conducted to the turret; or, no—the ascent is too fatiguing: I would not use needless severity—bear her to the east chamber of the earl's storey."

"Master Perez"—It was Ellen who spoke: they were the first words she had uttered since alighting, and, as she spoke, her eyes for the first time met those of their enemy; for they had stood with their backs to him as he approached, and she now turned, though still clinging to her husband's arm, and looked at him with a most piteously appealing glance; but there was something in his eye that made her shudder, and the blood rushed to her cheek, and as rapidly retreated, as she turned away, unable to conclude the sentence, from disgust and anguish.

"Madam!" began Perez.

"Sir!" cried Talbot, suddenly and fiercely confronting him.

Perez recoiled a step, and involuntarily raised his hand to his dagger-hilt. In a moment he recovered himself, and his brow grew black as night as he suppressed some strong emotion, and again commanded them to be separated: but Sheridan, who had received his orders to do so hung back, for Talbot still held his wife's hand in his, and his eye was full of dangerous purpose as it ranged from one to another, as if determining from whom he should wrench his weapon, and then sell life as dearly as he could. "Dogs!" exclaimed the warden, "seize him, I say; drag him to the *massey mor*—he is an excommunicated murderer!" The men, thus commanded, threw themselves bodily upon the knight, and after a brief, but desperate struggle, overcame him. The sight seemed to stir up all Perez's worst passions; the effect was like that of the first taste of blood to a tiger. "Drag him to the

dungeon!" he shouted: "thrust him in! Madam, be silent; be silent, I say. You shall not go with him; you must come with me: ay, and with me you shall stay!" He had seized her by the arm, and, with furious excitement, was almost dragging her away, when three galloglass came hurrying from the barbican. Two of these seemed endeavouring to restrain the third. "Stop, Art, are you mad? you will ruin yourself: hold him, Redmond; speak to him, Barry Oge; they ejaculated, as they strove to hold him back: but he shook himself free, and, rushing down, confronted Parez: "*Chorp an dioul*, Sir, would you lay hands on a woman, and she in such a condition!" he exclaimed. "I tell you that rather than stand by and see it, I'd join the King and the Gunner this blessed day."

"Ha! mutiny, mutiny!" cried Parez, and drew his dagger; but the galloglass, nothing daunted, grasped the pole of his battle-axe in both hands, like a quarter-staff, and still keeping between his commander and the tower, awaited the blow, should it be struck, with an aspect of determined defiance.

"Mutiny! mutiny!" shouted the warden, again and again, "treason and mutiny, ho!"

"Carry the poor lady to the barbican, Barry," said Art, and as Parez had abandoned his grasp of the captive, she was borne almost insensible to the quarters of her rescuer. "And do you, Redmond, bring down Gillaspire and the men of my own company," he continued. "*Dar lamh mo choirp*, I knew my men would stand by me," he cried, as they came running up in two's and three's at his call. "I have a command here, Master Parez, as well as you."

"Why, ruffian, what would you do? would you rebel against your general? Mutiny, mutiny, I say, Ho, Sheridan! Tyrrell! where are you? To the rescue—to the rescue!"

"The rescue is made already, boys," said Art; as Perez's adherents gathered round him, and stood half uncertain whether they were to lay hands on their old comrades or not; "the rescue is made already, boys, or 'tis little manhood we could boast of in Maynooth. I am no mutineer, but I am a married man, and I could never bear to see a woman ill used: you all had mothers, and some of you have wives; I ask you could you have found in your own hearts to stand by and see such a sight without anger?"

"It was an unmanly act," cried one.

"By the face of my mother, I could not have done so by the wife of a weaver!" exclaimed another.

"I have seen more blows struck under Sir John Talbot than ever I did under the warden," said a third; "and by the hand that was never christened, as I turned out for him once before, I'm ready to turn out for him and his *bantierna* again—*farrah!*"

"*Farrah! Talbot aboo!*" shouted half-a-dozen of Art's company, all animated with contagious zeal; but Art, who by this time had withdrawn his men close to their own quarters, stepped forward from their stand before the inner gate. "Master Perez," he said, "'I am no mutineer; and you see that I have friends here who will not let me be treated as such. What have I done to be called so? Why, this: I have prevented your doing what would for ever have disgraced you: the garrison are ashamed of it already. I am no mutineer, I say again; but I am a fitter keeper of such a prisoner, if the lady is to be detained, than you, Master Perez, who have not, as I have, a wife and family."

"Villain!" exclaimed the warden, "how dare you interfere in the disposition of my prisoners? Am I not commander here?"

"We both serve under *Tomás-an-Teeda*," replied Art;

"and to him I am willing to leave the dispute. I shall hold myself accountable for the safe custody of the lady until he arrives; but out of my hands she shall not be taken until then. What would you have, Master Perez? why do you claim the custody of a married woman?"

"You are a rebellious traitor, Sir," replied Perez: "you are a traitor, Sir, and you shall die a traitor's death! You are false traitors, one and all," he continued. "My commands have been disobeyed; my authority resisted: but you shall suffer for it. By Heaven, when the general comes, I will have every fifth man of you hanged for this mutiny."

As he spoke, the battlement overhead was struck suddenly, and the masonry driven about in all directions: the deep report of a heavy piece of ordnance accompanied the fall of the scattered stones. "To the walls! to the walls!" shouted Art. "They have opened their battery. Master Perez, let us forget and forgive"—but when he turned to speak to the warden, Perez was lying stunned by a blow on the head from one of the fragments of the injured masonry. They lifted him; but he was insensible. "Bear him into the keep, *mo vouchalee*," cried Art; "and let his wound be looked to with due care: until he recover, I am commander here."

"You were second in command, indeed," said Tyrrell.

"I am first in command now," replied Art.

"It is true," responded Gillaspike.

"Master MacConnogher is warden—*farrak*," cried Barry Oge.

"Silence; and hear your orders," said Art, at once assuming the tone and manner of command. "Rickard Tyrrell, do you bear Master Perez to the keep. Gillaspike MacRandle, I appoint you to the north platform of the tower. Barry Oge MacManus, you are my lieutenant

of the barbican. Tieg Sheridan, bring forth your prisoner, Sir John Talbot, from the *masey-mor*, and commit him to the custody of Master MacManus. Now, *mo hogha breevara*, every man to his post: let the word be *Eri aboo!* and show me that you ply your sakers and falconets like sons of fortunate fathers: *farrah!*"

They all replied by a shout, and separated to their various posts. And now the English shot was falling fast among the battlements, and rolling from the walls and tower into the ditches and across the court-yard: the guns from the walls replied; and Maynooth was, for the remainder of that day, filled with the tumult, and shrouded in the fire and smoke, of a hot and determined siege.

"I won't be able to finish to-night," said Turlogh; "but if I ply my batteries well, I shall mount the breach, I think, before this time to-morrow."

TWELFTH NIGHT.

"Proceed, Turlogh," said Red Hugh, the moment the warden's men left them alone next night; "I am longing to be at the opening of your breaching battery."

"Now that I have broken ground," replied Turlogh, "I mean to push my works with vigour, and don't despair of hoisting the English standard on the Castle of Maynooth before midnight," so saying he took up his tale.

THE REBELLION OF SILKEN THOMAS.

PART FIFTH.

WHEN Sir John Talbot was led from the dungeon into which he had been so roughly thrust a few moments before, his first impression was, that he was about to be carried to execution, and he strove to bear himself with as much self-possession as might become a man in so dreadful a condition. Had his thoughts been less occupied, he would not so long have left unnoticed the change of manner exhibited by his conductors. Those who had dragged him thither with savage violence at the command of Perez, now led him forth almost obsequiously on the orders of their new warden. But, until they reached the barbican, he expected nothing less than the rope or the axe. When they entered the archway, however, his fears of immediate execution were removed. He felt persuaded however that he was about to be given up, perhaps on an exchange of prisoners, to the English. But, the bridge was not let down—did they, then, mean to throw him into the moat?—no; they led him up a narrow stair in the thickness of the wall, and conducted him into an apartment, the floor of which was still shaking from the recoil of a piece of cannon, discharged immediately before they entered. The place was full of smoke and crowded with men; he recognised voices that he knew through the tumult: they were those of some of his own company that he had commanded at Artane—surely they could not design to injure him?—but why pursue his fancy through all the mazes of doubt and wonder that perplexed him until Art's final explanation of his release, and Ellen's

first half incredulous welcome? She was in an inner apartment, attended by the wife of her rescuer, the now commander of the fortress. The thickness of the walls, and the situation of the place rendered it secure against the cannon shot of the besiegers, but the report of every piece discharged from the adjoining gallery rung through it with stunning intensity; still, as the safest spot on that side of the castle, it was considered a fortunate thing that it had been assigned to them, and they, as wives of soldiers accustomed to the tumultuous occurrences of war, endured the hardship of their condition without complaint.

But although Talbot and his lady had thus escaped the more imminent peril that had lately threatened them, they were still in a state of great danger and distress; for, whether the castle should be held or lost, he must, sooner or later, fall into the hands of those whom he could not but look upon as enemies; and, in addition to this, and under any circumstances, poor Ellen had the prospect of seeing what was now to her an even worse misfortune rendered inevitable by the impossibility of making any exertion for the attainment of the Church's pardon. The warden, however friendly, was bound to hold them his prisoners till the arrival of Lord Thomas; even had he been willing to connive at their escape, the closeness of the investment prevented the possibility of effecting it; for, by the second morning of the siege, the English trenches commanded, or intercepted every avenue, while numerous and vigilant bands patrolled the whole circuit of their lines from sunset to daybreak.

The siege went on with little prospect of success on the English side for a week. Parez was still confined from the effects of his wound, and unable to take any part in the command of the garrison; the son of Connogher

accordingly continued to exercise his authority unquestioned : he was a favourite with the great majority of the men, and was obeyed with alacrity and cheerfulness ; so that the defensive operations went on too successfully under his superintendence to admit of any murmur among the adherents of the wounded warden. Perez, nevertheless, received every needful attention at the hands of his successor, and Art took frequent occasion to declare his purpose of surrendering his acquired authority the moment its former possessor should be able to resume its exercise. Accordingly, on the first day of Perez's convalescence, ere he had left his own apartments in the keep, MacConnogher sent up his baton, with an account of the state of affairs, and was prepared to obey orders, as when he had been only second in command.

In two days after, Perez made his first appearance on the walls. He was pale and haggard—his head was bandaged, and he was still unable to bear the weight of a helmet ; but, with seeming indifference to the danger of such exposure, he proceeded, leaning on Sheridan's arm, to the walls. The men received their wounded commander with that respect which soldiers ever pay to those who bear the marks of service. The short but mortifying altercation between him and his officer was half-forgotten, as MacConnogher had, during his command, studiously discountenanced all allusion to the subject, and the excitement of the siege had prevented much attention to anything beyond the passing events of the hour. Perez received the congratulation of his garrison with apparent indifference, or if any emotion was perceptible, it was but the uneasiness of conscious humiliation. Still he resumed his command with every appearance of having determined to make up for its temporary loss by fully exercising it now. Every post was rigidly

inspected, and many alterations made in the existing disposition of the defences, partly, as it seemed, to make a show of confidence in his authority, and partly, to express his disapprobation of the steps taken by his lieutenant. But, while he thus gratuitously asserted a right which he could not have feared to see disputed, by directing changes, many of them manifestly for the worse, he did not venture on a repetition of any of those demands which had been originally resisted; and when the son of Connogher, in the course of his duty as warden of the barbican, received him at the entrance of his post, he heard that functionary's report, and issued his own orders without once alluding to their dispute or its causes. It needed no experienced eye, however, to read through his forced calmness a deep and implacable purpose of revenge. Art was not less quick than his companions to perceive that his peace was far from being made; but he had now gone too far, and felt too much satisfied as to the justice of his cause to recede, and accordingly his first care after Perez's departure, was to take measures for the security of those whom he had at such a risk taken under his protection.

Sir John and his lady were walking in the gallery of the upper court—the only spot about the castle, where fresh air and sunshine could be enjoyed in safety—and hither their guardian hastened to seek them. It was well he did so, for the platform on which the arches of this corridor opened, lay right in the way of Perez as he went his rounds. The warden had been passing along by the opposite side, occasionally viewing the country through the embrasures of the parapet wall, when, on looking round, his eyes were arrested by the sight of the captives. They were standing where the sunlight fell on the floor of the gallery through one of its open arch-

ways, and were looking out in the direction of the mountains. They seemed unconscious of the presence of the warden's party, for the platform was overgrown with grass, and their footsteps were inaudible amid the din resounding from the other side of the castle. Talbot's arm was round his wife's waist, he stood clasping her to his side, the fresh breeze played with her ringlets, till they lay waving and wantoning over his shoulder, and some sudden emotion had made the blood mantle on her cheek, till she looked even more purely beautiful than in the unimpaired bloom of her happier days. Talbot was pointing to the hills; they were talking of their prospects should Skeffington be forced to raise the siege, and he, as he was not without hopes in that event, be set at liberty by Lord Thomas. They were, meanwhile, in perfect security; neither arrow nor bullet had fallen on that platform since the commencement of the siege, and the gallery overhead was proof against cannon shot.

"Should he play the part of his father's son, Ellen," said the knight, alluding to the expected conduct of Lord Thomas, "we may walk the dew together yet, over yonder blue hills of Wicklow."

"How lovely they look," she exclaimed, "and how unconscious of our woes and sins. Is it not strange that with all this tumult around us, I had forgotten the siege for a moment, while looking at them? but listen—how the cannon thunder! Are you sure we are not in danger while standing here?"

"We were safer in the barbican, said Talbot, drawing her arm within his, and moving away more suddenly than even her timidity had desired; for, as he turned his eyes towards the scene of action, they encountered the scowl of their hated enemy fixed upon them with baleful intentness from beneath the folds of the white scarf that bound

his bruised and livid forehead. At the same moment Ellen beheld their protector advancing from the farther end of the gallery, and signing to them to hasten that way ; she had not yet observed Perez, but as they had advanced the warden stood before them. Ellen shrieked, for he was a ghastly spectacle. Some strong emotion had burst the half cicatrised wound, and blood trickled down his cheek ; but his eye burned with the fire of unquenched malignity. He muttered some words scarce intelligible, and, with an impatient motion of his hand, summoned his attendants. Sheridan and Tyrrel advanced, but the son of Connogher was no less prompt.

" So, please your nobleness," said Art, " I would fain have your commands regarding the disposal of the stores in the great tower of the gateway ; this noble knight and his lady, who are in my custody (laying strong emphasis on the words), have need of further accommodation, and the bulk of these commodities takes up unnecessary room."

Perez turned fiercely on his lieutenant as he spoke, but the imperious authority of his glance gave way as he read the firm confidence of the looks that confronted him. The captives had drawn to the side of their protector ; the guard looked on with significant observation. He saw the risk he ran of having his authority questioned, and checked the dangerous command which was already rising on his lips. " Let the stores remain, sir," he said, with as much carelessness of manner as he could assume ; then looking round the vaulted ceiling of the gallery, he concealed his disappointed rage under cover of an examination into its security. " I thought that last shot had shaken the groin of the arch," he said, " but now I see it is a flaw in the masonry—look to your post, Master Mac Connogher—lead on, men, I am weak from my wound,

and must go to my quarters." So saying, he took Sheridan's arm and proceeded. His plea of illness might have been well believed, for he had spoken in a voice faint from conscious meanness, and as he went his steps were unsteady, and his knees shook beneath him, while he leaned heavily and in silence on the shoulder of his supporter. His face was pale, too, as that of a dying man, but the blackness of night was on his brow, and spread a double gloom over the discolouration of its actual bruises. He gained his quarters exhausted with anguish of mind and body, and did not show himself again till the following day. But now, before he had been an hour on duty, it was found expedient to restore many of the defences to almost the same arrangement that they had presented on Art's resigning the command. The warden was soon to be convinced of the distrust with which his orders now began to be regarded. On going his rounds the third evening, about dusk, he overheard the men in one of the flankers talking among themselves about the conduct of the defence.

"The churls will be ready to unmask another battery before morning," said one.

"Had we not wasted our shot so long upon their empty ditches, they could not have pushed their works so far for another week to come," was the reply of another.

"*Dar m'anim,*" cried the first speaker, "had the lieutenant continued in the command, they would have had another story to tell the Gunner before now; 'tis little less than mad the warden must have been to throw the work back as he did."

"I'll tell you what," replied the other, "it was spite and nothing else: if Art had let him deal as he liked with the knight and his bantierna, we should have heard nothing of countermanded orders."

"It is a true word for you, Shawn; the son of Con-nogher was in the right."

"By the hand of my body, he was in the right; and if it had gone much farther, he should not have wanted for one or two, that I know, to back him in it."

"Ho! if it ever comes to that, by this match in my hand, there's never a man of my company but would turn out at a wag of Art's little finger."

"By my troth, and I hardly know a man in the castle that would not do so, unless it may be, O'Madden or Sheridan; they, and one or two others that are always about him, would, I suppose, stand by the warden in a pinch; but, to tell you the blessed truth, Con, it is very discontented entirely the most of us are to see how we're sold by his ill ordering of the defence."

"Well, never mind, *mo bouchall*, we're bound to obey, and do the best we can with such orders as we get; so hand here your rammer till we give the churls another shot."

Parez did not wait to hear more; he returned to his quarters to reflect on what had been said. He could not have believed that his authority was so weakened; he still hoped to regain it, and to assert his power over the prisoners sooner or later; but the temper of the garrison, to judge by all that he had seen and heard, would now no more permit this than that he should seize and execute their favourite, his lieutenant himself—a design which he had seriously entertained during the earlier stages of his convalescence.

Those who had an opportunity of observing the warden's window, which opened on the inner yard under shelter of a stone colonnade, might have seen his shadow come and go on the drawn curtains as he paced with rapid but unequal steps through his apartment, thenceforth till long

after midnight. It still wanted some time of dawn when Talbot rose to view the state of the walls; for it was thought that a new turn would be given to their operations about sunrise, when the English were expected to open the battery they had been for the last two days constructing in advance of their former works. The firing on both sides had ceased; the besiegers were too intent on preparations for the morning's cannonade to waste their ammunition from a comparatively ineffectual distance, and the Irish could not tell where the threatened danger was to be met, as a deep trench concealed all the nearer operations of the enemy. There was neither moon nor star; but a grey, hazy light in the sky showed the outlines of objects with sufficient distinctness after the eye had had time to adapt itself to its imperfect agency. To Talbot the long line of parapet appeared unbroken from tower to tower; for the sentries kept under shelter lest they should be seen against the sky by the enemy beneath; and the platform was bare of all but its silent guns, under the carriages of which many of the wearied artillerymen lay hushed in profound sleep. The word had been passed a little time before, and every thing had relapsed into silence, save an ominous hum from the field that had lasted throughout the night, and gave fearful token of the storm that was shortly to burst from the English trenches.

The knight contemplated the scene with an interest which he could not suppress. He knew the strength of the castle, the enormous thickness of the walls, the ample numbers of the garrison, their munition and strength in artillery. He had watched each move of the besiegers—he had seen the opportunities they possessed, or might possess—and he was satisfied that in good hands Maynooth could still hold out for six weeks against any force

the Deputy might bring against it. "Ah," thought he, "had I the ordering of but one piece of cannon on that flanker I should soon make them unmask the guns—and that an hour before their time, too—that they are planting yonder so securely." As the thought shaped itself in his mind, he raised his eyes to the spot, but was surprised to see the figure of a man clearly defined above the parapet wall, at the angle nearest the field and most exposed to shot from the works below. "Keep down, sirrah!" cried Talbot, "or you will be marked by some of the churls, and get a bullet through your head. Ha!" he exclaimed, as the twang of a bowspring told that the venturesome individual had discharged an arrow against the English trenches; "ha, by my hand, you are a lusty artilleryman! Your shot, I'll warrant, has dismounted one of their demi-cannon at the least!" but ere the words were spoken the archer was gone. A moment's consideration banished the smile with which Talbot had regarded the seeming bravado. "Alone! gone! I do not like this," he said. "Ho, sentry, who was he who loosed that arrow off the west flanker?" The nearest sentry had been looking down at the ditch and counterscarp through an embrasure, and only heard the sound of the shaft overhead; he on the next station had seen a man descend into the courtyard, but thought it was his neighbour who had loitered with his comrade when last relieved. Whoever he had been, the archer was not to be found, and an increased movement in the English trenches prevented further inquiry; but Talbot held the circumstance in his recollection, and determined to keep a sharp watch on that part of the walls next night.

Morning, as had been expected, developed the further operations of the besiegers. Just at sunrise the first embrasure of the new battery was thrown open, and the

black mouth of a piece of heavy cannon appeared frowning through the unexpected aperture. In rapid succession five other portions of the concealing rampart fell away, disclosing each its gun, all pointed towards the centre of the north wall of the castle, where it was weakest, as well in masonry as in its flanking defences. Maynooth castle consisted of the keep, a huge, square pile in the centre of the court-yard and its quadrangular outworks. These were flanked at intervals by other towers, of mean proportion when compared with the great donjon they surrounded, but many of them equal in size to the chief keeps of strong castles. It was against the north side of these outer walls that the English battery had now been opened. The first salvo was fired the moment the masking stuff had been cleared away, and a heavy fall of masonry announced with how formidable an effect. It was not, however, any part of the main wall that had yielded thus suddenly. As in the case of Dublin Castle, when battered by the rebel troops the year before, the rampart was but stripped of a watch turret, the base of which overhung the ditch. The fall of stones and timber rattling against the foot of the rampart, and plunging into the displaced waters with such a crash, spread a moment's consternation among the Irish; but when the smoke cleared off, and they saw their main defences uninjured, they gave a bold reply to the English shot, and thenceforth till midday the battery and walls blazed with the fires of an equal cannonade.

It was a sight to make the heart of a soldier bound, about mid-day, to see that side of Maynooth castle. The wall was stripped of all its battlements and turrets—cornice and corbel beaten clean off the face of the masonry, and covering the rampart foot with scattered ruins that sent up clouds of dust and spray, as each new fall beat out

the lime from their disjointed masses, or drove them, with sliding banks of earth and rolling timbers, thundering and flashing into the ditch beneath. Still the main wall itself stood unshaken and swarmed with defenders. Every embrasure and loophole poured forth its shower of shot and arrows, and the cannon from the flankers and north angle of the barbican thundered incessantly. On the other side the battery sent forth its volleys at intervals ; but each salvo shook the air with such a report as drowned all other noises, till the ear recovering, could catch the crash of falling fragments and the roar of shouting men again. The smoke lay in the calm air like a thick bank of mist above the ditch and trenches, or rolled up round the walls in slow fleecy volumes as each successive explosion heaved up its stifling canopy : for the light atmosphere did not permit it to ascend, nor was the gentle breeze that bore it from the walls strong enough to dissipate it when it settled down.

Amid this scene of unnatural darkness and devastation, the great keep of Maynooth stood stern and undisturbed in the calm face of heaven, like a grave warrior, conscious of his strength, awaiting victory. The Geraldine banner displayed from its summit scarce rustled upon the tall flag-staff, or if it did occasionally unroll a portion of its field in the light wind, it was but to be kissed by the sunshine and return to its folds, as if in calm scorn of the uproar underneath. But these below had no eyes for the quiet security of the rest of the castle ; theirs was fierce labour, and a perilous footing among blood and ruin—plying their shot over broken parapets and through half-choked embrasures, treading amid prostrate men, loose fragments from the wall, dismounted guns and broken carriages, with the din and clamour of hell resounding in their ears, and death flying from their hands in flame and

thunder. It was enough to make a coward join the struggle of his own accord to observe the tumult and to hear the answering shouts of the combatants as they cheered on their comrades in the hot and panting labour. “Saint George! Saint George! huzza!” resounded from the English trenches after each volley. “*Farrah! Croom Aboo!*” was the cry at every shot from the walls.

“*Tomás-an-Teeda go bragh!*” shouted the son of Connogher, as he stood by the side of his smoking culverin, with outstretched neck marking the effect of his last shot; “*Dar lamh mo choirp*, I hit within a foot of the saker’s trunnion; had I been three hands’ breadths nearer she was dismounted: but I’ve choked the embrasure; I can see it through the smoke half filled with rubbish, and there are two of the churls down. Hand me a crowbar, till I lay her an inch lower,” he cried, shifting the wedge under the breech of his gun. “By the hand of my gossip, the old wall stands it well!” he continued, as another salvo from the breaching battery rebounded from the unshaken rampart.

“They might as well pitch their shot into the face of the Scalp,” said Barry Oge, ramming down the charge as he spoke; “I remember when a hole had to be made under the platform stair for a sewer in the old earl’s time; and you might as well have tried to pick through the solid whinstone; it is a perfect quarry, twelve feet, if it be an inch. But come, Master MacConnogher, are you levelled?”

“Stand clear,” cried Art, “I have them covered; so, by the blessed Patrick, here’s for the churls once more: *farrah!* Ah, *dioul, dioul!*” he cried the moment after, “I have levelled too high by half a fathom.”

“Give me a pinch at the gun,” cried Talbot, who had been gazing at the scene from a bench in the back of the

gallery; and, springing forward at the word, he seized the iron bar, swayed up the culverin, and had levelled again, before he for a moment recollected his situation.

"By the hand of my body, Sir John!" exclaimed Art exultingly, "I knew you could not hold back much longer. Stand clear, you sons of unfortunate fathers, till his nobleness lays the gun. Staff of Patrick! but 'tis proud I am to serve under your father's son once more, *a vic wasail mo chree!*!" But the knight, with a sigh, and the pang of remembering that he was no longer entitled to take a part on either side, laid down the match which he had just raised to apply to the touch-hole. "I have no right, Art; I have no right," he said, and turned away.

The tears were in poor Art's eyes as he took up the abandoned implements, and resumed his management of the gun. "If your nobleness would but fire this once," he said, suspending the motion of his hand as he brought the match down to the powder; "sure 'tis not to be expected that you should stand idle and the work going on at such a thundering rate before your face! Well," he continued, as Talbot threw himself again upon the bench, "let who will lay the match to, 'tis your nobleness's shot any rate;" and so saying, he gave fire.

"*Furrah! croom aboo! Tomás-an-Teeda go bragh!*" resounded from every part of the gallery the moment the effect of the shot was seen. "The saker is dismounted!" cried one. "There are three churls down under the carriage," exclaimed a second. "Their battery is all in confusion," cried a third. "*Farrah! Talbot aboo!*" shouted Art. "Noble Sir John, take the command of us. Here we are, as ready to stand by you as ever! Come on, *mo vouchalee!* don't you hear how they are cheering him from the platform? What do we care for the cowardly

warden? *Talbot aboo!*" The men joined vehemently in the shout, and Talbot stood for a moment half irresolute: his blood was on fire; his foot unconsciously advanced, and his hand, with instinctive eagerness, gripped the shaft of a rammer; but what right had he to rush into gratuitous danger, while every shot, even sheltered as he was, went to the heart of his wife with such a pang as her faint voice and imploring eyes had too well attested when he last left her side? "I dare not do it, Art," he exclaimed; "but I must leave you; for if I remain here I cannot keep my hand from the work."

He turned, with an effort; but at the moment, a shot from the English trenches came in through the embrasure, and, breaking a piece of metal off the lip of their gun, struck the wall, and, in its rebound, killed one of the men and dreadfully shattered the leg of another. An exclamation of rage followed from all parts of the gallery, and the rest of the company, careless of who their commander might be, began to work their cannon again with all the eagerness of revenge. Talbot dragged out the wounded man from the midst of the tumult. He was one of his own old troop. The bone below the knee had been crushed and shattered: the man had fainted from pain and loss of blood. "If I can take no part in the battle, I can, at least, see my wounded friends cared for," said the knight; and, lifting the soldier in his arms, he bore him out by a side door to the platform, at the further end of which the hospital had been established. This was the main scene of battle, and it was with considerable difficulty that Talbot made his way, under such a load, through the tumult that filled it from end to end. This, too, was Perez's post; but the knight had forgotten him in the excitement of the moment. He had not, however, advanced more than a few steps when he saw the warden:

he was pacing backwards and forwards on a little spot of clear ground, protected by the height of the parapet, which was there without embrasure, and bore a light wooden gallery overhead for musqueteers; his step was unequal and impatient, and his countenance full of gloom. He did not observe Talbot, for his eys were fixed on the ground during the time the knight was in sight; once they were raised with a quick suspicious look more like the furtive glance of a spy than the calm survey of a general on his own walls. The knight could not but remark with surprise how little interest he seemed to take in the defence; and, as he proceeded, he over-heard from more than one the expression of similar astonishment.

Talbot gained the hospital unhurt, and duly committed his charge to the care of the attendants. To rejoin Ellen he had now to return by the same way, and had again to pass the warden. While staggering under the weight of the wounded man, and toiling through the wreck of the platform, on his way to the hospital, the knight had not observed the various missiles that fell on or over the narrow road he trod: but, as he was without armour, he had now a much quicker eye for the flight of an arrow or the fall of a round shot; for, although the whole force of the breaching battery was directed against the face of the wall, the guns of the more remote trenches had not yet ceased to throw frequent shots into the platform and court-yard beyond. But they were archers who chiefly galled this position, and it was trying enough to the courage of an unarmed man to see their shafts glancing up from the sea of smoke, and flashing in the sunbeams, like so many separate pencils of light, as they fell around him. As Talbot gazed up and down seeking to avoid such as came his way, he observed one arrow rise from the smoky cover of the trenches with a slow and irregular

flight, very unlike the rapid curve of a shaft shot in anger. He marked its course; it came waveringly through the air towards him; and, ere it dropped, he saw that, in place of the goose-wing, it was feathered with a billet. He snatched it up: the letter was addressed to the hands of the warden. "By my honour," cried Talbot, as he plucked the paper out of its slit in the wood, "I was right when I guessed there was some foul play in the bowshot from the flanker last night! Parez is in correspondence with the English: he was the man I saw on that occasion. By Heaven, I will charge him with his treason face to face!" He rushed forward with the sealed billet in his hand; but, before he had pressed through more than half the obstacles that lay between him and Parez's post, the word was passed along to send forward the letter *from the warden's spy*, that had just been shot in. "From the warden's spy!" cried Talbot. "Have we, then, a spy in the English trenches?"

"It would appear so," said the old soldier who took the letter—for Talbot rendered it the instant he heard it thus voluntarily acknowledged; "but our warden is not fond of telling us of these things before their fit time."

"This accounts for his anxiety during the last hour," said another.

"Most likely he has been expecting this missive. God send the news may be good; for if we had got but good information of their designs this morning, we might have had their battery silenced before now."

"Ay, and, with the help of the blessed Patrick, we will silence it before the sun sets. There are two of their best pieces dismounted already. *Farrah!*"

Talbot did not wait to hear more: he pushed through the crowd, anxious to ascertain whether he had really injured the warden in his suspicions or not. He found

himself again in Perez's presence, just as the billet was put into his hand; for the bearer had been hurt by the way, and the delivery delayed. The face of the warden flushed deeply as he broke the seal, and the unaccustomed blood did not leave his cheek till he had read the letter through. Then his eye grew full of triumphant speculation, and his step became rapid and firm as he paced to and fro, apparently meditating on its contents. It was an unusual thing for those around to see a smile on the pale countenance of the warden; yet, though all present argued satisfactory intelligence from such a symptom, there still lurked somewhere on his features an expression which no man there could behold with pleasure.

"So please your nobleness, I trust the news is good," at length said the captain of the platform, who had been ordered to attend, and who awaited the communication with marked impatience.

Perez started. "The news, O'Madden!" he said hurriedly, thrusting the crumpled billet into his bosom, where he kept handling it under his doublet for a moment. "By my hand of valour, the news is good: we shall give the sally shortly. Ha, *mo vouchalee*," he exclaimed, with an animation such as he had not hitherto displayed during the siege, "we shall have knocks at close quarters before the sun goes down! Who here has the cleanest knack of cutting the throats of churls? Let him get his skene in order; for he will have work enough within the hour, if my spy deceive me not. Ha! O'Madden; I did not show you the knave's billet. Mark what an account he has given of their loss in the trenches." So saying, he plucked it forth, and handed it to his officer. O'Madden perused the paper with evident satisfaction, and it passed from hand to hand among those who stood about

the warden, some reading and some commenting on the contents.

"Slain in the battery, fifteen men and a sergeant; wounded, three-and-twenty."

"And in the trenches?"

"Twelve slain and nineteen wounded since sunrise."

"*Farrah!* I knew we'd do the work when the range was altered, as I advised: if we had done so at first —"

"What say you?—numbers of the English in our favour? By my faith, they are wise; 'twill be safer to be friends than foes to the Ape after to-day. *Croom aboo!*"

"What is the hour fixed for the sally?"

"In about an hour from the present time."

"By the blessed bells of Saint Woolstan's, Master Perez is a good man in the gap, after all! He is going to head the sally in person."

Talbot's blood mounted to his face. He felt shame for having entertained unworthy suspicions even of an enemy. He cast his eyes to the ground, in the confusion of an ingenuous spirit; for, although he had not given utterance to a single imputation of treachery, he was unwilling to look the warden in the face, until reparation had been made for the injury done him even in thought. He felt that, while a prisoner in the fortress, his own presence there, uncalled for, might well excite animadversion. He moved away, with an air of more conscious condemnation than he ever remembered to have exhibited before. His uneasy steps were arrested by the voice of Perez; but the tone more than made amends to the knight's conscientiousness, for the warden addressed him with a levity, that was not less unexpected than offensive. "Ho, ho, Sir Knight," he cried; and Talbot, looking up, encountered his glance, which was full of insolent triumph. "Ho,

ho, Sir Knight, we give the sally shortly. Shall we count on you as a volunteer?"

"Master Perez, I am here a prisoner," said Talbot.

"Ay, and will continue so till latter Lammas, if you count on being enlarged by the Gunner," replied the warden, with a mocking, ghastly laugh.

Talbot turned to go, without making any reply; for he felt that he could not do so without betraying irritation, which every motive now urged him to repress, for the warden's authority was evidently on the increase, and it seemed doubtful, should the sally he meditated prove successful, whether Art himself would much longer be able to contend against it. Perez regarded him, as he went, with another glance of ominous meaning, and the knight returned to his quarters more anxious and perplexed than ever. He had not long sat here calming the fears of his wife, when he heard the warden's voice in the gallery without. His amazement was much increased to hear the tone of cordiality in which he spoke with Art and his company. The reason, however, soon appeared; he was inviting volunteers for the sally; but so great was the willingness of the men, that, instead of requiring the inducement of fair words to go, it needed all the warden's authority to oblige a sufficient number to remain. Foremost of those who offered themselves and were accepted was Art; the best men of his company followed under Redmond and Barry Oge; while Gillaspire was obliged, much against his will, to remain as captain of the gun.

Singing and shouting, the volunteers descended to the court-yard, and Talbot again came forth, and took his station by a deserted loophole, to be a spectator of their sally. On the left flank of the English position, and occasionally disclosed, as the skirts of the great cloud of smoke were rolled back or lifted by the breeze, stood a

single gun behind a temporary breastwork of gabions and sand-bags : it had been brought forward to supply the loss of one of the dismounted pieces in the battery, and was planted here until a place on the breaching platform should be cleared for it : but the breastwork of the breaching battery was now one shapeless mound of earth, all its embrasures beaten down, and the ground, for ten yards in front, quite ploughed with the fire from the walls ; this, however, slackening as the men were withdrawn for the sally, gave an opportunity to the English to repair the damage ; and when Talbot looked forth, their sappers were swarming over the face of the half-levelled rampart, clearing away the rubbish of the fallen parapet, and piling up a new breastwork under the covering fire of the detached gun that has been mentioned, and of a second, similarly planted, on the other flank, both aided by a constant discharge of small arms and archery from the main trenches behind.

Talbot had just time to observe these features of the scene below, when the noise of the descending drawbridge announced the issuing of the galloglass. They sallied in two bodies, one led by the son of Connogher, the other by the warden. Perez's company took the safer service of covering the drawbridge and securing the retreat ; while the division led by Art came down along the edge of the fosse with the noise and impetuosity of a torrent, and never slackened their speed till they had swept the field clean over the temporary battery, which they trampled into rubbish, on to the foot of the main breast-work itself : up it they went like a wave of the sea, and over, and down among the bristling array of the defenders in the trench behind, with a roar of shouting men and a crush of iron, that made the knight leap to his feet, and involuntarily join in the cheer of encouragement that

SEE. III.

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rang from the walls. For some minutes the strugglers were concealed by the intervening rampart; but the storm of mingling weapons was still visible above the breastwork—sword and battleaxe flashing bright through the smoke as every blade caught the sunshine, and the whole flickering and whirling tumult swaying backwards and forwards with the eddying impulses of alternate victory. At length the tide of conflict set in steadily in one direction, and the whirling sweep of the axe fell fast and faster through the thinned array of spear and broad-sword, as the Irish drove their antagonists in one tumultuous mass out of the choked trenches in upon the area and platform of the breaching battery. Here, under and over the silent guns, they now plied their work with the cold steel, while the gradually dissipated smoke of the gunpowder was replaced by a steaming cloud of dust, tossed up from the reeking labour of two hundred grappling combatants.

At last the battery also was abandoned by its defenders, and the Irish, dragging away the bodies that encumbered every gun, prepared to turn their momentary success to advantage; for although they were now alone upon the ensanguined platform, they had still to make good the passages at either side against such numbers as must soon regain their lost position. There was a minute's fierce toil with ropes and crowbars, and a gun was seen heaved up to the crest of the bulwark; another effort with their iron levers, and a shout as they heaved again; then down went the cannon, its smashed wheels flying diverse, and its carriage torn in two, as it plunged, with a crash, into the ditch below. The spray of its fall had hardly returned to the tossed surface of the water, when another followed; but the Irish were no longer able to maintain their ground, and before the platform itself could be torn up

they were driven over the rampart back upon the field. Still they kept together, and gave determined battle, making for the ground where the detached piece of cannon still remained among the ruins of its little battery and the dead bodies of the artillerymen who had fallen in defending it. Here they made another stand, but it was only while a strong rope was fastened to the carriage; the moment this was done the gun was dragged away, and the galloglass came in at full speed, the cannon leaping and rattling in the midst, as they tore it by main force over every obstacle, until they gained the verge of the fosse again, and found their further retreat covered by the protecting lines of their companions.

They were received with long and vehement cheers, both from the warden's company and the men upon the walls; and when they drew their prize at length into the castle, and stood to breathe themselves in the security of the inner yard, it was a spectacle worth earning by a share of their danger, to have seen the exulting triumph of the whole garrison. But, of the number that had sallied fresh and vigorous under the son of Connogher, there remained no man that was not now exhausted by toil or wounds, and many that had issued from the gateway, were not among those who even in such a plight recrossed its threshold. Talbot had descended to the court the moment of their arrival, anxious for the safety of his friends. He apprehended he knew not what calamity, but his fears were groundless; Art and Barry Oge were both there, panting, begrimed, and bloody, but sound of body and limb, and full of fierce exultation.

"*Chorp an Chriost, Sir John,*" exclaimed Art, the moment he saw the knight, "I'd rather than Ireland that you had been with us!—we have not left a gun in their battery fit to fire—*hurroo! croom aboo!*—fetch me

a flagon of ale, you sons of fortunate fathers, till I drink success to *Tomás-an-Teeda!*"

"Ale, after work like yours," cried Perez, whose looks of triumph were now as bright as those of any around; "no, by my hand, Master MacConnogher, it is in the very best wine of Spain we will drink to the son of Gerald. Ho, Sheridan, fetch forth a butt of Spanish wine into the great hall of the keep; by the bones of Brendan, Master MacConnogher, we must drink a cup together after the good service you have done me this day, or I should ill deserve the aid of such an officer."

"With all the veins of my heart, warden!" cried Art, grasping the hand which the other extended as he spoke.

"By your hand," said Perez, warmly returning the pressure, "there is not another man within the four seas I'd rather drain a cup with than yourself; and if there was any ill-will between us, Master MacConnogher, it was not I desired it: but why talk of what is past and gone?—there is not a man in the castle I could not take by the hand after such a day's work as you have done for me—not one, by my honour; and here is Sir John Talbot, and by St. Patrick's staff, if he will but join us at supper in a cup to old times, notwithstanding all the injuries he has done me, and Heaven only can tell how great and numberless they have been—I say, if Sir John——"

"Master Perez," said Talbot, "I never did you an injury; but, till other reparation is made me than the offer of so unseasonable a carouse, I shall not forgive the wanton injuries that you have done me. You are warden here, and if you think a butt of wine can safely be broached in a castle so hotly assailed——"

"What, sir; do you presume to lecture me upon my duty?" exclaimed Perez, turning pale with what seemed

sudden rage. "But that you are befriended by a man who has done me such good service, I should have you made to know a fitter business for a prisoner, as you are, than to bandy objections against the discipline of this garrison! Master MacConnogher, you left their battery in such a condition as will warrant us in any refreshment for the men we please."

"By the hand of my body," said Art, "I left it worse crippled than I ever saw a battery before; you hear there has not been a shot since, Sir John; the men are hot and thirsty, and *dar Kiaran*, they do need some refreshment." He spoke decidedly, but with a tone of regret at having to condemn the interference of the knight by giving his voice against him; and Talbot, angry with himself to think that he had caused unnecessary pain to his friend, yet unable to make any amends in the presence of Parez, withdrew in silence and dissatisfaction to his quarters.

By this the sun had set, and the lights in the distant encampment of the besiegers began to twinkle through the twilight; but, in the devastated trenches all was dark and silent. The success of the sally had been complete; the battery was a mass of ruins, and the English had abandoned all attempts to reconstruct it. Whatever guns or ammunition had been left were now removed, and the whole aspect of the field seemed to proclaim that the siege was about to be changed to a distant investment. To a garrison so well victualled as that of Maynooth, such a prospect was anything but disheartening, especially as Lord Thomas himself was daily expected with a powerful army out of Connaught.

No wonder, then, that the walls rang with many a shout of triumph and secure revelry, as the men enjoyed the bounty of the warden in their different quarters, for, with their evening rations, Parez distributed to all a

liberal allowance of ale and aqua vitæ. Talbot had blamed himself for an allusion which seemed to impugn the conduct of Art in permitting such an indulgence to the men at that important crisis, but when he found that the son of Connogher did not return to his quarters at the usual hour, and remembered certain extravagancies into which he had fallen while at Artane, and heard the prolonged indications of carouse, which since sunset were resounding from the keep, he began to justify his former opinion: growing momentarily more and more uneasy, until, unable longer to control his anxiety, he went out upon the walls, to see whether the sentries were at their posts, and if the different guards were ready in their quarters to turn out on an alarm. He found nothing but feasting and revelry among the men, many of whom were already in a state of intoxication. The sentries, it is true, had not left their posts, but friends and comrades were with them on the walls, where, dark as it was, they sat in knots among the ruins, draining aqua vitæ from horns and meathers, boasting, singing, shouting, and, here and there, one more weary or less strong-headed than the rest, asleep. Talbot was a prisoner: it was only by sufferance that he was permitted to leave the barbican, or walk the battlements at all; he had no authority to make the men desist, and mere expostulation was worse than useless. He determined to descend to the court-yard, and make an effort to see Art; for, independently of his regard for so many old companions, and unwillingness to see them suffer by the capture of the castle, it was now an object with Talbot to aid in the defence of the place by every means that a man so situated might honourably employ, until the arrival of Lord Thomas, at whose hands he hoped for so much more favourable treatment than from the English. He found the court-yard deserted,

but the great hall of the keep was crowded with revellers. He advanced to one of the windows, and looked in ; there was a long table before him covered with drinking cups, and all a-swim with wine ; the best men of the garrison sat round, their faces flushed, their eyes on fire, their tongues stumbling in universal clamour. The loudest and most excited was the lieutenant of the barbican. "Drink, sons of fortunate fathers, drink !" he shouted from his end of the board. "Ho, Master Perez, why so pale ? I challenge you to drink a cup of wine with me ; my throat is full of the dust of the churls' trenches still."

Perez, pale and uneasy, was sitting at the head of the board eyeing his guests with quick, suspicious glances, more like a man among enemies than a host in the midst of friends. But this might be the natural disgust of an invalid unable to keep pace with the enjoyments of those around him. He started at Art's summons, and, evidently affecting a degree of intoxication, forced a wild laugh as he poured out a goblet of wine and exclaimed — "Drink ! I will drink with you, son of Connogher, till the dews rise in the morning ! *Slainte go bragh !*" Then he threw himself back in the seat as if to drain the goblet to the bottom, but in reality to conceal the fall of the liquor, which he spilled aside over his shoulder. None at the board remarked it, and Talbot could well imagine an excuse for unfair drinking in a sick man so situated, but to affect intoxication at the same time was doing too much to promote the hilarity of guests under any circumstances, but particularly now, when it was manifestly the warden's duty to put an end to the carouse as speedily as possible. But there seemed no symptom of an approaching conclusion ; and Talbot, after sending in two messengers, neither of whom returned, was obliged to go back without any of those whom he had come to seek.

Enraged, and beginning to grow alarmed at the state of the garrison, he mounted the platform once more, determined to take some means of breaking up so ruinous a debauch. There was a half-extinguished lantern lying under a gun carriage, where it had fallen from the hands of one of the drunken galloglass ; a sentry with his back propped against the parapet and an empty black jack between his knees, sat sleeping beside it. Talbot plucked a match from his belt, lighted it, and passing on towards the barbican, with a swift and steady step applied it successively to the touch-hole of every gun upon the platform. Three of the cannon being charged, went off, and immediately there arose a turmoil in the court-yard greater than had yet resounded through Maynooth since the siege began. The voice of Art was loud above the storm of curses, shouts, and exhortations that rose from the throng of unarmed men, half terrified, half desperate, as they choked the doorway of the hall, trampling upon and impeding one another in their mad efforts to get out. "To the walls, to the walls ! " he exclaimed ; " every man to his post ; I've drunk the warden down ; but *dar lamh mo choirp*, I am able for two churls yet, *Farrah !*" and so saying he rushed up on the platform. But there was no enemy to be found : the walls were scoured in all directions—the sentries questioned, shaken, struck ; but all in vain. Talbot had succeeded in exciting whatever vigilance remained among them, and he now left it to operate with undiminished force, and, as it soon appeared, with happy effect also ; for, ere the alarm subsided, all the sentries were on the alert, the guards disposed in their several guard-rooms, and the garrison at large lodged in their proper quarters.

While this was proceeding the Warden was not seen either in the court-yard or on the walls. He was sought

for in the hall by those who had seen him, at the commencement of the alarm, sink, apparently overcome in the debauch, beside his seat : but here he lay no longer ; and as the doors of his own apartments were closed, the search was given over, in the belief that, finding himself unable to contend against the effects of his excess, he had retired to conceal them from the garrison. It might be, too, that his excuses were made with a more ready consideration on account of the unwonted good fellowship and liberality that had rendered them necessary ; but to Talbot, who knew there had been no excess committed by the warden, save in deep dissimulation, all this wore a different, but a much more perplexing aspect. He, however, was wearied with excitement and watching ; and now that the sentinels had been replaced and recalled to duty, did not much longer continue to watch or listen ; but speculating vaguely on the conduct of Perez, which he felt inclined to attribute in the main to cowardice, fell not reluctantly asleep.

Talbot started up : he had surely heard a shout from the walls ; but all was silent now, save the heavy breathing of the men in the outer gallery, where Art and his company had their quarters. It was still dark, but the knight had slept so soundly that he knew not how long, so that it might be a little after midnight, or it might be on the point of dawn. The events of the night before came confusedly upon his recollection, as they ever do on that of a man who has been much fatigued, and he stood for a moment self-condemned to think that, with causes of suspicion so palpable, he had not seriously provided against treachery before now. But it was now too late ; he had heard the shout, and now heard it again from the main platform itself, and that both loud and clear—“ Saint George, Saint George ! huzza ! ” “ A Holland, a

Holland!" "A Brereton, a Brereton!" "Down with the rebel dogs! Huzza! the castle's won!"

"*Croom aboo!*!" exclaimed the son of Connogher, and the floor shook as he leaped to his feet from the bench on which he lay, ready accoutred for an emergency, as were also his men; but he still spoke with the accents of intoxication. "Who says the castle's won?" he cried. "You lie, you churl, the castle's not won! Up, up, *mo hoga!* the churls are on the walls; *farrah, farrah*—follow me!" and he threw open the door that led to the platform, and charged out among the English—for the English they were who now stood on the main ramparts of Maynooth. They had crossed the ditch where it was choked by the fall of the watch-turret, and ascended by ladders. The drunken sentinels lay gasping in their blood on the posts they should have guarded, many of them put to the sword before they had had time to spring from their fatal sleep to unavailing resistance; the keep and court-yard were already in the hands of the assailants, and overwhelming numbers soon drove back the son of Connogher and his companions from the main platform: all that strength or courage could now effect was to make good a retreat into the barbican; and hither the repulsed party with difficulty retired, hardly sober, wounded and blaspheming in the madness of despair and self-condemnation.

"*Dioul, dioul, dioul!*!" cried the unhappy lieutenant, striking his brow with his clenched hand, when he saw the wretched spectacle of wives and little ones crowding up from the lower apartments; for the families of most of the married men of the garrison were quartered here; and piteous it was to hear and see them, in the clamorous disorder of their terror and confusion, cling to those who could but a little longer protect them—some with tears

and entreaties, others with reproaches—the children weeping aloud in terrified astonishment, and all despairing."

"Pulse of my heart!" exclaimed Art, in a voice of agonizing anguish, as he embraced and then gently repulsed his wife and stood keeping up tables and benches against the door—"pulse of my heart's blood! keep away from me, and leave me to do the best I can for you all. Sure, Norah, you know I will lay down my life for you."

"We will all die before they harm a hair of one of your heads!" cried another father or husband.

"Oh! Art, Art," exclaimed his wife, "this is what I often told you would come of—but Art, dear, you're hurt. Blessed Virgin! you'll bleed to death if you don't let me tie a handkerchief round your arm."

"Mind little Feargus, Norah; don't heed me, for I deserve it all. *Chorp an dioul*, it was my own folly that has brought us all to this!" and again the wretched lieutenant struck his brow.

"Queen of Heaven, have mercy on us!" cried Norah; "they are breaking in; I hear them with hammers at the gate below. My child, my darling child! what will become of you?"

"To the archway, *mo vouchalee!*" exclaimed Art; "the churls are breaking in from the court-yard; stay where you are, my own darling; there's not a drop of blood in our veins that we won't spill for your sakes!"

"To the archway!" cried Barry; "and if they come up it will be over our dead bodies."

"Stay!" exclaimed another; "they are bringing one of the platform guns to bear upon the door; stay where you are, and we will fight them where we stand."

"*Dar m' anim*, we have the advantage of the ground here; let us stay and defend the gallery," cried a third.

"Let them come," shouted a fourth; "we'll meet them here."

"*Choirp an dioul, Sir,*" cried Art, "are we not bad enough already without your disobeying orders? to the archway, I say!"

"To the *dioul* I pitch you and your orders!" was the reply, and a blow succeeded. All was now clamour and confusion, and the woman and children involuntarily raised the *ullaloo*, when a voice was heard, calm but distinct, over the tumult, commanding silence. "Son of Connogher, am I again your captain?"—It was the voice of Talbot.

"Noble Sir John, I would rather than Ireland you were!" cried Art; and a general shout of *Talbot aboo!* was raised by the men.

"Then, silence and hear your orders. The barbican cannot hold out ten minutes longer." The lamentations of the women were here renewed, but soon checked by the severe tone of command in which the knight now spok. "The English will execute all male prisoners; such of you, therefore, as are able to bear arms must sally forth; but as the enemy are in force on the other side of the fosse, your wives and children must be left behind. The women will be safe from violence. For the men there is no alternative; it is better to escape thus than to provoke further ill-treatment by selling your blood at a cost that can but exasperate the victors. Hear your commands. Barry Oge, take six men and be ready to lower the drawbridge the moment the outer gate is thrown open. Son of Connogher, to you I commit the leading of the sally; throw open the outer gate when I give the word, and charge with your own and Redmond's company; Gillaspike, you will join the son of Manus when he has performed his orders, and with him bring up the rere."

Talbot issued his commands, with a peremptory rapidity that left no time for dispute or interruption, marching the men into the open space between the outer and inner gates from the galleries above, where the women and children were compelled to remain, after a brief space allowed for parting ; and a sad scene their parting was ; the words of fondness that the husband pronounced over his wife were scarce audible in the din of blows redoubled on the yielding gates that must before long admit the enemy. The preparations were soon made ; MacConnogher, battle-axe in hand, was at their head :—“ Are you ready ? ” cried Talbot ; the lieutenant was struggling with some strong emotion. “ One minute, Sir John ? ” he replied, and looking to the knight for his assent, laid down his battle-axe, and ran back to the gallery. Art’s courage was too well known to admit a suspicion of blenching on the mind of any who were present, and it was thought that he desired to bring away some valuables, an opinion which procured him but little commendation from the impatient and by no means clear-headed band he had left behind. He returned with little Feargus in his arms, folding the infant in a mantle as he descended. There were some who, as they beheld him, could not forbear a smile, but the greater number sympathised in the solicitude of the affectionate father.

“ Here, Redmond,” said Art, “ help to tie him on my back. I could as soon leave the heart out of my breast behind me ! Feargus, *a lanna*, ” he said, looking round as the boy was belted firmly between his broad shoulders ; “ ‘tis the first time I ever had such reason to be loth to show my back to an Englishman ; and, darling, if your father has to show it for the first time this night, may the great God put a shield over you, that will take their blows as freely for your sake as this breast that I may

never press you to again ! Noble Sir John, I am ready."

Talbot wrung his hand—" May God speed and protect you !" he said : and grant that we may meet again."

" Staff of Patrick, Sir John !" exclaimed Art, " do you not come with us yourself ? "

" No," said the knight, mournfully, " I must not leave my wife."

" *Chorp an Chroist*, Sir John, and why should we leave ours ? "

" Were they in the same danger, Art, I should ask no man of your company to cross the drawbridge to-night: do you remember from what you have saved her already ? "

" *Dar m'anim*, Sir John, the warden can do you no harm now."

" Would that he were past harming us more," replied Talbot ; " but, Art, he has the will and I fear is likely to have the power also ; but the gate will be driven in before you go, if you tarry longer. Son of Manus, let go the chains; draw the main bolt, Gillaspire; there, throw it open wide : now, *mo hoga*, forward ! strike together, and hold right ahead, and may God speed you ! " The last words were drowned in a shout, with which the Irish rushed into the darkness, and in another half minute the noise of strife from beyond the draw-bridge, announced that they were among the enemy. Talbot stood listening till the rush of the sallying column sounded from beyond the spot where they had met with opposition, and then, satisfied that they had fought their way with unexpected success so far, he turned to the inner gate, now fast yielding to the exertions of those within the court-yard, and, withdrawing the bolts, stood alone in presence of the victors.

"Sir John Talbot, you are my prisoner," said an officer, advancing.

"I yield myself willingly to so brave a soldier, Sir William Brereton," replied the knight, "and I would claim gentle usage for the women and children, who are the only persons left here."

"No violence shall be done to them," replied the Englishman; "but your lady, Sir John, I must keep in strict custody, as well as yourself, until my Lord Deputy arrives."

"I thank God, that I have to deal with a man of gentle nurture at last," said the knight, "and shall not complain if we be but left together."

"I have no orders to separate you, Sir John, and shall be satisfied by your keeping your apartment."

"By my honour, I thank you!" cried Talbot, involuntarily extending his hand, but Brereton drew back.—"Pardon me," said the knight, quickly; "I had forgotten; I am a prisoner."

"If mine were the only bonds in which you are wrapped, Sir John Talbot," replied the Englishman, "I should not let such a difference of condition stand between me and the hand of a man who did such good service to my mother's brother; but ——"

"But what, Sir? I understand you not."

"I am a Christian," replied the Englishman.

"Death and perdition!" exclaimed the knight, "is this accursed curse to be flung in my teeth at every turn? I pray you, Sir William, to pardon me, I have no right to tax you with injustice for believing what the world believes of me, although how wrongfully I call God and man to witness. My innocence shall yet be made apparent to all men if there be virtue in truth, or justice in the ends of Providence; but I weary you: lead me to my

place of custody." During this conference, the barbican was entered by the troops from the court-yard, as well as by those returning from their ineffectual attempt to stay the flight of the escaped garrison. Talbot was conducted to his apartment, at the door of which a sentry was posted, and was permitted to remain with his wife, undisturbed save by their own apprehensions, till after sunrise.

Daylight disclosed an altered scene to the captives, as they sat at the great window over the inner gate, looking down on the court-yard. Instead of the exulting gall-glass, in his wild costume, shouting and singing round the doorways, there stood the well-ordered men-at-arms, drawn up in two fair lines from the keep to the gateway, silently awaiting the arrival of the victorious Lord Deputy. The red cross of England floated on the breeze from the flag-staff that had borne the banner of Fitzgerald at sunset; and the cannon which but a few hours before had cast death and confusion into the trenches, were now turned on the walls they had defended, and pointed at the miserable remnant of the garrison where they stood, crowded into a narrow corner of the court, disarmed, dismayed, and helpless, expecting the doom of rebels. As the dawn grew clearer, the knight could mark the faces of many whom he knew, among his unhappy fellow captives: there was Tyrrell, weak from loss of blood, sitting on the pavement with his back to the wall; O'Madden was there with one arm broken, hanging loose and motionless from the shattered shoulder; and Sheridan, whom, after all his enmity, he could not but pity, with his hands tied behind his back, and his head sunk on his breast, while the blood trickled from a wound on his forehead. Many others there were whose sad plight he could fully commiserate, but the only man whom he could not have pitied was nowhere to be seen. And now the sound of drums and

trumpets announced the Lord Deputy's approach, and all eyes were turned to the gateway, as the mounted cavalcade crossed the drawbridge, and poured into the castle with the combined pomp of military, judicial, and ecclesiastical power; for there rode with the Lord Deputy the Chief Justice, the Chief Baron, and the Lord High Chancellor Archbishop Cromer, with many other exalted personages of high authority in the state. But another spectacle attracted more than a divided interest with the entry of Sir William Skeffington. As the Lord Deputy appeared at the gates, there issued from the keep a company of officers to receive him in the court-yard; these were led by Sir William Brereton carrying the keys; after him came Salisbury and Holland, two English captains, leading—Parez. On him all eyes were turned. He was neither manacled nor disarmed, and he advanced with an air of ostentatious confidence, although greeted by a yell of execration. It was evident to all that he had sold the castle.

"You have done the king good service, Sir William," were the first words Talbot and his wife heard Skeffington pronounce, as they were led forward expecting, indeed, the worst that could befall them, but bearing their fate with resignation; "you have done his majesty good service, Sir William," said Skeffington; "let me now know what have been the terms."

"So please you, my lord, a thousand pounds to Master Parez in hand, and the disposal of two prisoners in his custody."

Talbot started, and Ellen's heart began to beat with apprehension.

"Are they rebels to the king?" said the Lord Deputy.

"So please you, my lord," replied Brereton; "I will read your lordship his letter of stipulation, which will explain all."

"Proceed, Sir William;" and Brereton took forth a paper, from which he read as follows:—

"For the honourable hand of Sir William Brereton, knight, these, with speed.

"Right Honourable—If you would devise a means to do yourself a service you would not waste your shot on my wall, but rather consider what I propose to your discretion. I am able to hold this castle, if I so desired, till Christmas. I am able to give the same into your hands, if I will, before sunrise to-morrow. Ponder the difference, and weigh well the advantage. It is not that I need a reward, and yet a thousand pounds were far short of the value of the service; but I have reasons which concern myself, and are sufficient. Wherefore, taking no thought of what may move me, take heed of what I am moved to. I will render you this castle if you will secure me a thousand pounds in hand, and the custody of my own prisoners. They are but two—a villain whom I must be left to deal with as I please, he and his paramour. On these terms, and no other, you shall have the castle. Mark me—I must have the full custody and disposal of my prisoners; *that* and the thousand pounds. So (right honourable), if you think fit to entertain this offer, send me a reply, and shoot it in to-morrow, as I to-night shoot this to you. Direct it to my own hands: I shall devise a means to have such a billet in readiness as shall pass for it, should it be seen by any of my garrison. And now, as you shall deal with me or not, I offer you my commendations or defiance; for, be assured, that my power is equal to either course you take. Farewell.

"PAREZ, Warden of Maynooth.

"Postscriptum—Mark, the full custody and disposal of my prisoners.

"C. P."

The Irish garrison, manacled and guarded as they were,

could with difficulty be restrained from violence, as they listened to the reading of this letter ; and Perez, although he stood protected by an armed guard, quailed and shook under the terrible curses heaped upon him by his victims. Order, however, was again restored, and the betrayer recovered his effrontery as Brereton proceeded. “ My lord, this letter was brought me yesterday morning before sunrise, and in reply I shot in an answer about mid-day, accepting the warden’s offer, and craving to know when and how he purposed to fulfil it. Soon after the garrison sallied forth, and your lordship has seen with what success, so that I scarce expected to hear again from Master Perez ; but being constant to his word, he shot me another billet a little before sunset, which I will also read to your lordship.

“ ‘ For the honourable hands of Sir William Brereton, these, with speed.

“ ‘ Right honourable and my very good Sir—My commendations to you. You may scale the north wall where the ruins of the turret have choked the ditch, without fear, when I shall show a light from the middle window of the west side of the keep nearest the battlement. The capture of a gun from your trenches offers a fit occasion for rejoicing ; and I shall so order it that there shall be no lack of liquor to carry the garrison’s revelries to a fortunate issue. I have drugged a cask of wine for the nonce, and if I be not deceived, some of our light hearts shall have heads heavy enough before morning. Remember the conditions of our agreement, and, till I meet you at the door of the keep, farewell.

“ ‘ Your honour’s assured servant,

“ ‘ C. P.

“ ‘ *Postscriptum*—My prisoners lodge in the barbican : they are, one Talbot, erewhile a knight, but now under

the ban of the Church, and a Mistress Eller Dudley, his paramour.

"C. P."

"My lord," continued Brereton, "the signal being given, as here described, about two hours before day, we entered the place as directed, and found the garrison asleep; so that little labour sufficed to complete the work, save, only, that some Irishry, quartered in the barbican escaped: the warden's prisoners, however, are secured, and now await your lordship's pleasure."

"I cannot break the faith which you have pledged, Sir William," said Skeffington. "This Talbot is convicted of the murder of an archbishop, and it matters little into whose hands he may fall, since, as I gather from Master Perez's letter, the warden meditates him as little good as the Chief Justice."

"My lord," said Perez, stepping forward, "I am willing to hand him over to the civil power, to be dealt with as the law has provided. I only stipulated to have the disposal of him, that so great a criminal should not escape by exchange of prisoners or otherwise."

"Then why not execute him out of hand, while you had him here?" asked the Deputy.

"My lord," replied Perez, hesitating, "I—I was unwilling to stretch my authority as warden; but, my lord, he is at your lordship's disposal now; and as for the lady——"

"Well, Master Perez, we shall settle this presently," said Skeffington. "In the meantime, I have to thank you, on my master the king's behalf, for this service, which I acknowledge to have been a sparing of great charges and a saving of many valiant soldiers' lives to his highness; and when his Majesty shall be advised thereof, I am bold to say he will not see you want during your life. But, as I hold a poor one thousand pounds but a

light recompense for service so weighty, I should wish to know what has been your condition as a servant to the rebel in order that no man need say hereafter, you have been the loser by this change of masters."

"My lord," replied Perez, colouring with pleasure at his complete success, "I have to return your lordship my most hearty thanks for your consideration; and as to the estate in which I have been supported while serving the rebel, trust me, my good lord, I should esteem my condition much more honourable and prosperous to enjoy but a tithe of the same, as bounty from his gracious Majesty, who is my natural and rightful sovereign, albeit I have most basely and unnaturally rebelled against his lawful authority."

"But, to the point, Master Perez: what benefits have you enjoyed as servant to the Geraldine?"

"My lord, if I were to relate all the gifts, bounties, and emoluments that have been extended to me by the arch rebel and his father, I should name a sum little short of five hundred pounds in the year."

"Five hundred pounds a-year! Five knights' fees to one warden," said the Deputy, with impressive severity of manner. "Perez you have served a liberal master."

"Ah, my lord, if he had been but loyal to his prince, I should never have had such a master again: but, indeed, my lord, I had peculiar claims upon his bounty."

"How so, Sir?"

"My lord, I am own foster-brother to *Tomás-an-Teeda*."

The rage of the prisoners again broke forth in loud execrations, and extreme indignation at the warden's baseness was freely expressed by many of those who stood around; but Sir William Skeffington turned his head aside, and Perez could not see whether or not he shared the general disgust.

"Sir William Brereton," at length he said, after a pause, during which the colour came and went upon the traitor's cheek, like shadows of an April day, "read me the warden's letter of stipulation again." The letter was again read. "Have you a thousand pounds in the military chest?" asked the Deputy.

"My lord," replied Brereton, "it is here," and he pointed to a heavy bag of gold carried by a man-at-arms.

"Pay him his money," said Skeffington. The money was poured into a helmet, and handed to the warden to count; but he replaced it in the bag, and said he was willing to take it on the knight's word.

"Are you satisfied so far?" asked the Deputy.

"I am, my lord. I have nothing more to ask but the custody of my own prisoners."

"They are at your disposal."

"Then, my lord, I hand over the murderer to be dealt with by the laws; and I claim the wardship of the lady, since she is not his wife, and as I am her next of kin within the four seas: my mother was her father's cousin, and she is not yet of full age."

"You have your demand," said the Deputy. "Marshal, take this knight into your custody. Madam, consider yourself the ward of Master Perez. Now, Sir, are you satisfied?"

"I am, my lord: the conditions are amply fulfilled," exclaimed the traitor, with a smile of triumph so diabolical, that a murmur of indignation was heard from the assembly, while the Irish prisoners showered a storm of curses on his head, both loud and terrible. Perez bore all with exulting effrontery. But the tumult ceased at once, when the Lord Deputy turned to address the warden.

"You are satisfied?" he once more inquired in a stern voice.

"I am, my lord," replied Perez, but in a tone of decreasing confidence.

"Provost Marshal," cried Skeffington. The officer advanced; the Deputy pointed to Perez, and, speaking so loud as to be heard to the remotest quarter of the court-yard, cried, "Chop me off the villain's head!"

"My lord!" exclaimed Perez, starting back, in half-incredulous dismay.

"Chop me off his head, I say!" cried Skeffington again, in a still louder voice. "He has got what he has bargained for: he shall never betray a brother's trust again!"

"My lord, my lord," cried Perez, "you cannot mean to take my life! You are bound to do me no violence."

"Villain, it is false!" exclaimed the Deputy. "I am bound to give you a thousand pounds: look to your money, count it; you have the full sum you asked. I am bound to give you the disposal of your prisoners: you have voluntarily made one over to me; and I have, at your desire, appointed you to the wardship of the other: but, traitor, I ask you, where am I bound to give you your life? is that in your agreement? have you bargained in your billet for that? Ho! search me his letter of stipulation for a saving clause in favour of his life, that I may send him under as much iron as he can stand beneath, to enjoy it in the deepest dungeon of Dublin Castle. Search me the traitor's letter for a stipulation that he shall have life or liberty, till I hunt him out of the gates as I would a wild dog out of my pinfold! Take him, I say, Master Provost, and let me see his head upon the barbican within an hour."

"Mercy, mercy, mercy! my lord!" exclaimed the

wretch, dropping on his knees: but his supplications were drowned in the shout of savage delight with which his sentence was hailed by the Irish prisoners. “*Willy-na-Gun go bragh!*” cried Tyrrell, springing to his feet with eager desire, to praise the just avenger of betrayed friendship. The exertion was his last, for he sank fainting to the ground, never to rise again.

Sheridan, glaring on his betrayer through the blood that covered his face, took up the cry from Tyrrell as he fell. “Long life to you, Gunner!” he exclaimed; “and I care not, after the word that you have said, though we all go to the gallows this minute! but, Gunner, *a vick*, rebels though we are, don’t execute us on the one tree with the traitor. Ah, villain of the world!” he cried, turning his gory face on Perez, “do you remember how you set me against poor Art—that was the true man in the gap after all—by telling me that he and Sir John Talbot were plotting to betray the castle; yet it was you yourself, you Judas, that sold us all.”

“Ay,” cried O’Madden, stretching out his sound arm, and shaking his clenched hand at the kneeling wretch; “who was it that inveigled me into seizing that knight and his poor lady in Barnsbeg, as I did, on a forged warrant from *Tomás-an-Teeda*? You knew I would never lay hand on him on the charge of Alan’s murder, since the night of Nicholas Wafer’s death, when he declared with the last breath he ever drew, in your presence and in mine, that Sir John Talbot was innocent of the deed as the child unborn. Yet now you come forward to charge the knight with a crime that he who was its chief perpetrator has acquitted him of in your own presence, and within a gasp of being in the presence of his Maker!”

“My Lord Deputy,” said Archbishop Cromer, who had been attending with marked interest to all that passed,

and now spoke eagerly and firmly, "I would question yonder Irish soldier touching what he says of my late brother of Dublin's murder. I have already heard enough of this knight's case to make me anxious for a further inquiry; and I entreat that neither he nor his lady may suffer any violence or insult till I shall have thoroughly examined both this soldier and the wretched man you have ordered to execution."

"May Heaven reward your lordship!" exclaimed Ellen, fervently, pressing forward to clasp the Archbishop's robes. "Oh, my lord, if you did but know what we have suffered since that day when you sent me away despairing from Monasterboyce! But, alas, my lord, I do not mean to complain, but to thank and bless you for coming to our aid now, when our sufferings are at their worst."

The Archbishop, when he looked on his suppliant, was deeply moved. "God help you, my poor daughter," he said. "Yours has been a heavy burden of sorrow: but time presses, and if I would be satisfied of this unhappy gentleman's innocence, I must proceed to the inquiry without delay." He motioned to O'Madden to approach. "Were you present by the death-bed of Nicholas Wafer?"

"My lord, I was, and a horrible death he died."

"Did he acknowledge as his, the guilt of Archbishop Alan's murder?"

"With groans and tears, my lord, and shrieks for mercy, that were enough to make a man's hair stand on end."

"What did he say of this knight, Sir John Talbot?"

"He cried out, my lord, that there were two whom he would shortly meet in hell; and when Master Perez, who was there present with me, asked him who they were, he

said the Earl's squire was one, but that neither he nor Taling would know their comrade till they all met face to face. Then Master Perez said, 'Wafer, why rave you? you know your comrade.' 'I know it was not he who bears the blame,' was Wafer's answer; 'I could see enough to tell that the man who joined us at the door, as we dragged the old man in, was armed at all points, and was lower than myself by the head; whereas the knight lay asleep on a bench within, and disrobed, and stands two inches taller,' said he, 'than I myself;' and, with that, he prayed God to forgive him for bringing an innocent man into such trouble; groaning and lamenting, in a way pitiable to hear.'

"And what answer made Perez to that?"

"My lord, he flung out of the room, saying, that he would not hear the Church's judgment called in question."

"Where lies he now?"

"My lord," replied Brereton, "we are only awaiting a priest and executioner to put him out of temporal pain. He is in the guard-room of the barbican, quite distraught for terror. There is some great sin on his conscience. I have seen many men, my lord, afraid to die; but never before one like Perez."

"How is that, Sir William?"

"My lord, he sits on the ground, with his head sunk between his knees, muttering the most fearful curses I ever heard from the mouth of man. Where he can have learned them, God knows; but it seems to me as if they were some awful imprecations of the Church which he thinks are now being fulfilled on him."

"Lead me to him, Sir William," said the Archbishop; "I begin to see my way through these mists of error." So saying, he proceeded to the barbican, where Perez was

confined. The unhappy man was alone in the dungeon, sitting, as Brereton had described, in all the nerveless prostration of despair, on the floor where he sank when first thrust in by the guards. He was shuddering and muttering, in the monotonous tone of a man unconscious that he spoke aloud—"The waters of vengeance are in my inner parts ! Ah! Wafer, I shall see you soon now : mine is the girdle and waters of vengeance—for what was it they said? 'be they girded with the girdle of malediction, and made partakers of Pharaoh, Nero, Herod, and Judas the proditor.' Ah, hell, hell ! I too, am the proditor ! The waters of vengeance are within me, as marrow in my bones. The curse to the very letter is fulfilled in me. With Dathan and Abiram I shall descend into hell quick ! Teling and Wafer, we shall descend into hell quick ! Horrible ! horrible !—you will know your comrade then, Wafer ! You said you would know me when we met face to face at the judgment. That was the word; and you shook in your leprosy like a dry husk. For what was it they said?—'Good Lord, send them hunger and thirst, and strike them with the pestilence, that they be consumed and their generation clean eradicate.' The bells are tinkling—faugh ! how the candles stink ! Ah, sons of Belial, our souls shall be so extinguished, and so shall stink in the nostrils of the Divine vengeance. Great God, I heard it but once, and I remember every word !" He shuddered, and raised his head, as if to dispel the tremendous recollection by gazing on the objects present, but cast himself forward on his knees when he lifted his eyes from the ground and saw the Archbishop in his robes before him, his hands uplifted in horror and amazement. "Mercy, mercy, mercy!" cried the wretched man, and strove to clasp the Prelate's feet in all the abjectness of prostrate supplication. The Archbishop mo-

tioned to be left alone with him, and the guards withdrew out of earshot.

In less than a quarter of an hour Archbishop Cromer came forth into the court-yard, where the Lord Deputy, with his attendants, was still standing, and requested that Sir John Talbot and his lady should come before him. The knight and Ellen advanced into the circle before the Lord Deputy. "My lord and gentlemen," continued Cromer, "it is known to all of you that this knight has been attainted of the murder of my late brother of Dublin, the Archbishop Alan. The nature of the evidence which seemed to convict him is also known to you, as well as the tremendous sentence pronounced by the Church against him. My lord and gentlemen, in the perpetration of that murder there were three persons concerned; two of them, called Teling and Wafer, of whose guilt there is no doubt, and the third, as has till now been generally supposed, this much-wronged gentleman, Sir John Talbot. In such returning years as God may vouchsafe me, I shall ever count this an auspicious day, for it has seen the truth of this matter at length brought to light. The true murderer, my lord, is discovered; Sir William Brereton is witness of his voluntary admission of guilt: Christopher Perez did the murder, and has confessed it. May I pray you to restrain the expression of your amazement, till I shall have done justice, so far as now can be rendered, to this innocent and much-wronged gentleman. Kneel down, Sir John Talbot; and, my lord and gentlemen, I pray you silence. In the name and by the authority of that Heavenly Host, invoked to sanction the misplaced imprecations of the Church, I hereby absolve you, John Talbot, knight, from the sentence of excommunication erewhile pronounced against you. I restore you to all the rights, honours, and immunities whereof you have been

deprived by that misplaced malediction : and I declare your marriage with this lady, Mistress Ellen Dudley, to have been true, binding, and honourable wedlock, from the first." Here Cromer ceased and Skeffington advanced. "Rise up, Sir John Talbot," the Lord Deputy exclaimed ; "you are a free man, by the bounty of his Majesty, whose general act of pardon, for such as have laid down their arms previous to the taking of this castle, is hereby extended to you, if you think fit to avail yourself of its provisions."

"Now," said Turlogh, "that things begin to look somewhat better, I can leave our hero and heroine with a tolerable grace till to-morrow night, when I shall tell you whatever else I know about them or their fortunes."

THIRTEENTH NIGHT.

"By my hand, Turlogh," said Henry O'Neill, as the captives drew their seats round the fire, to listen to their nightly entertainer. "By my hand, Turlogh, you have taken my advice to some purpose, in not running Silken Thomas to a conclusion so hastily as you did the Captive of Killeshin."

"Keep a good heart, my prince," replied the bard ; "I will make an end of him before morning," and so saying, he proceeded.

THE REBELLION OF SILKEN THOMAS.

CONCLUSION.

WHEN Talbot found himself once more a free man, his first impulse, after pouring forth the most fervent thanks he could express to the good Archbishop, was to bear Ellen away from the gaze of the bystanders, and with her withdraw from Maynooth. But the Archbishop, who stood talking with Sir William Skeffington, motioned to him to remain. Talbot could see the looks of the Primate and Deputy occasionally directed towards him, and was soon confirmed in his belief that he had been the subject of their conversation, by the Archbishop desiring his attendance in the great hall of the keep. The knight glanced at his companion : he could not leave her, weak and agitated as she was, among an assemblage of rude soldiery, and he hesitated to bring her with him to a conference which might involve affairs of State : the good prelate saw his difficulty and relieved him. "We would speak with you alone, Sir John," he said ; "but fear not for your lady ; she shall have all due care and attention. Ho, Ambrose," he continued, calling to one of his people, "search us out among the women of the garrison some careful and honest female to attend on my Lady Talbot, till such time as we can arrange for her journeying to my sister's of Saint Mary's of the Green, where, if it please you, Sir John, we purpose that she should remain until you shall have determined on your final course. The Abbess is my own kinswoman, a tender-hearted and devout lady as any in Christendom ; and you, my daughter, shall not lack effectual commendations to her kindest offices."

Poor Ellen could hardly realise as yet the wondrous

change in her fortunes : but she expressed her thanks, and when she found herself once more attended by the kindly Norah—for Art's wife was unanimously elected to the office—and had leisure in retirement to consider how complete and timely was the favour shown to her by Providence, she began to feel in all its force the delightful assurance of her good fortune, and wept and blessed God by turns in the fulness of her gratitude and happiness.

Meanwhile the Archbishop and Knight stood in the recess of a window in the great hall : “And now, Sir John,” said Cromer, “that the King’s bounty has made you a free man once more, what are you willing to do to show your sense of his highness’s loving kindness towards you ?”

“ Whatsoever a man may do with honour, my lord.”

“ God forbid that I should ask you to undertake aught else,” replied the Archbishop ; “and I did but set the extent of your obligation before you, that I might not seem to ask an unreasonable thing, when I crave your services, as I would now do, in this unhappy quarrel, on the part of such a benefactor.”

“ I trust,” cried Talbot, colouring, “your lordship does not desire that I should bear arms against Tomás-an-Teeda !”

“ Trust me, Sir John, I could ill bring myself to seek such a service as that at your hands. It is a work of peace and charity that I would have you do ; God knows we have had enough of arms on both sides ; enough of bloodshed and disaster. I am the chancellor here, Sir John, and my duty to my royal master accords with my own sense of what is just in sanctioning the vigorous vindication of his rights ; but I love the land, Sir John, and I love the people ; and I grieve to see this fair

country defaced, and this brave nation ruined by civil strife and driven into outlawry and barbarism, as we have been of late, for the sake of these petty grudges and unworthy motives that weigh more with the movers of the war than the happiness or misery of thousands. For what was it but a splenetic rash jealousy that first spirited on my erring brother of Dublin, to practice against Kildare? A proud young lord, belike, will not be twitted by a grey-beard without a malapert reply; and for this, which were scarce sufficient cause of quarrel between two boys at play, we have the Christian bishop trapping the King's first servant into rebellion, and the Viceroy of our faith's defender implicated in the murder of his own Metropolitan: and now, when the war is half exhausted by its own violence, and peace is already almost within our grasp, what but the pride of the unhappy young lord himself, and the selfish rivalry of the envoy who had last to deal with him, has hindered us of the happy issue that night and day I have prayed for ever since this miserable broil began? Sir John; here in Ireland it is every man for his own peculiar; but for the commonweal of the nation no man, unless it be one who is too old to care for private gains, or too obscure to be drawn into public rivalry. For military service, for crafty negociation, for violence and circumvention we have hands enough, but a man well affected to the King, and yet honestly disposed towards the family of Kildare, we have not hitherto been able to find, and without such a man, I fear there is little prospect of a termination to the war. Now, Sir John, you stand dearly bound to the old Earl: you were as I hear in some sort his adopted son, and you took arms against the King, for love of your benefactor, when Alan first spread that false rumour of his murder: with Lord Thomas you have now no quarrel, since the stain of that unhappy Prelate's

blood is washed away from your name for ever, and, methinks, from what I have heard of his disposition and demeanour, you cannot but cherish such a good will towards Lord Thomas Fitzgerald as might be reasonably claimed from you by his father's son. This then is what I have long desired, to find a man sincerely willing to serve all concerned ; such a man, Sir John, I take you to be, for I am bold to say that his highness's clemency towards you this day will weigh no less on an honourable mind than your former benefits at the hands of the old Earl. I have, therefore, arranged with my Lord Deputy to entrust you, if you be willing to accept it, with a proposal of terms to the misguided young nobleman, whom we long to see restored to his allegiance and his natural friends. The terms are stringent, but he must suffer the penalty of his violence and folly ; and we trust to you to recommend them to his consideration by whatever means of persuasion you can urge : alas, you will have no lack of argument riding from Maynooth !—Illstarr'd young gentleman, you little dream who stands this morning beside your council table, you little think whose standard is flying from your father's flag-staff ! But, Sir John, you will have worse news to tell Lord Thomas than that Maynooth is taken, news that will go further to bend his haughty spirit than the loss of ten castles—he has broken his father's heart : the Earl is dead, dead for grief on account of his child's sin and folly ! Ah, what a lesson to us all, to think that but for the vain pride of one headstrong and brainsick youth, Gerald Fitzgerald might this day be sitting in his own hall, at the head of the prime nobility of his nation, instead of lying at the public charge, as he does, in a dishonoured and untimely grave among strangers ! Sir John, I conjure you, if you undertake this mission, as you loved him who is gone, neglect no means,

SER. III.

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forget no argument to win this unfortunate nobleman to reason : his father's bones can never rest in the grave till we restore the country that he loved to peace—peace—ah ! could I but see that blessing again extended to us I care not how soon my own bones lie at rest ! ”

“ My lord,” said Talbot, “ I thank God for having put it into your heart to choose me on this service ; for I have a strong assurance that I shall not be altogether unsuccessful with Lord Thomas. But your lordship has told me what it wrings my heart to hear. I have had of late sorrows of my own, my lord, that have made me familiar with grief ; but my heart were callous indeed if it were not touched by the miserable end of one who was my benefacter and my friend. Pardon this emotion, my lord, I cannot just now control it. I may say I had no other father : a kinder father I could not have had than Gerald, Earl of Kildare. From my sixth year his house was my home ; his countenance my only patrimony. Yes, my lord ; doubt me not, I will strive to repay the obligations I owe him. Alas that I can never do so as his bounty towards me would deserve ! My lord, it will not surprise you that I forgot my allegiance, when I thought that such a man had met with foul play : but, as I took up the sword last June for his sake, I now take up this message of peace with a right willing heart, and only pray God to grant me success proportioned to my zeal in the undertaking.”

“ That you will use your best efforts to bring all things to a happy issue for the house of Kildare, I doubt not,” replied Cromer ; “ and now, if you will come to me and Sir William Skeffington in half-an-hour, your instructions shall be ready. But before you go, Sir John, it behoves me to explain still farther. The Lord Deputy is surrounded by adventurers, needy, grasping, and unscrupu-

lous. These are, one and all, desirous of prosecuting the war while an acre of the rebel's estates remains to be confiscated. This has been the secret of so many failures in negotiation, and this influence will operate even now in rendering the terms which you will have to propose less acceptable than they would be if left to the unbiassed arrangement of the Lord Deputy himself. I have therefore sought, so far as I have been able, to urge you to such perseverance and exertion as will be needed before this proud lord can be brought to stomach our conditions ; and I again beseech you to remember how many thousands of your countrymen depend for life and happiness upon the result of your endeavours."

"May God judge me, as I do my best for all parties !" said Talbot. "And now, my lord, as I start in so short a time, I would, if it please you, spend a part of it with one who is very dear to me: it is long, my lord, since we have had a happy half-hour to ourselves before to-day."

"Go to her, my son," said Cromer: "go to her, and assure her of every kind office that tenderness can bestow upon her till you return. It is hard to separate you now; but there is no other man can do the work, and it must not be delayed."

In half-an-hour, Ellen descended to the court-yard, leaning on the arm of her husband. The Archbishop's attendants had a horse litter prepared for her journey to the abbey: it was the same, although more carefully spread and curtained, that had borne her to Maynooth. "Ah, Ellen," said Talbot, as he placed her with her attendant in the rude vehicle, "we had a different prospect before us the night we last drew these curtains round us in Barnsbeg !"

"May the Queen of Heaven keep us from ever spending such a night again !" she replied; "but, thank God,

all were well now if you could but succeed in this blessed errand. Dear John, spare no entreaty, use every argument. Oh, if you but restore us to peace, we shall have purchased such a blessing cheaply by all we have endured."

"I shall do my best, love," he replied. "And now, till I return, be careful of yourself. Norah, I expect to see Art with my Lord Thomas; who knows but I may bring him back a free man before the week is over? Now then, farewell. I shall seek you at Saint Mary's on my return; and may Heaven bless you, and all good angels watch over you till then!"

The litter, with its attendant guard, moved on, and Talbot returned to the court-yard, to receive his instructions. The sight which met his eyes as he issued from the low archway was such as to dispel the joy that had expanded his heart the moment before. Six of the rebel prisoners hung suspended in the agony of death: others stood or knelt around, awaiting their fate, as their confessor prepared them in succession for execution. "Oh, God," exclaimed the knight, raising his eyes in earnest prayer, "grant that I may be the instrument of putting an end to these horrors!" and with a confirmed determination to use every means of accomplishing his purpose, he proceeded to the keep, averting his eyes from the shocking spectacle as he passed; and, shuddering to hear the murmured prayers of those who were next to undergo the dreadful sentence. The Archbishop received him with a look of melancholy intelligence, and, handing him a packet, said, "These, Sir John, are your instructions, which you may peruse by the road. I trust they may afford a remedy for all such scenes as you have just passed through; but, should they fail, I doubt not you will be able to console yourself by the reflection that it will not

be for lack of exertion on your part. Now mount, Sir John, and ride day and night till your errand is accomplished."

"My lord," replied the Knight, "I shall need a sufficient escort as well as guides."

"Your escort is prepared," replied the Archbishop; "but I doubt if they know the country well enough for rapid travelling. Where lies the rebel now, my Lord Deputy?"

"My last intelligence left him near the Slieve Bloom mountains," replied Skeffington; "but, if the Knight pleases, he can have one of these unfortunate kerns of the garrison, whose life I will forgive on condition of his guiding the party. Is there any of the Irish whom you would choose for such a service, Sir John?"

"My lord," replied Talbot, "the two men who know the country beyond the Pale better than any others in Leinster are O'Madden and Sheridan, who would, either or both, gratefully purchase their pardons by such a service: they are in the court-yard."

"Take them," said Skeffington; "but see that you bring them back in safe custody. We will draft them into the King's new levies. Salisbury, tell the Provost-marshal to give the poor rascals up. A little clemency, my Lord Chief Justice, may, after all, be useful in reconciling the people to our authority."

"Yes, my lord," replied the Chief Justice, "when it does not prejudice the vindication of the King's authority." Talbot waited to hear no further discussion: he returned to the court-yard, where he found the liberated galloglass already on horseback, blessing God for their escape. They would have thrown themselves on their knees when they saw their deliverer; but Talbot sprang on Glundhu, (for his charger had been brought to Maynooth at the same time with himself,) and, clapping spurs to his sides,

dashed out of the gateway, glad to leave such a scene of blood and torture behind him O'Madden and Sheridan now pricked forward to the head of the party, to point out the route, and Talbot received their thanks as they rode beside him.

"Indeed, Master O'Madden," said the Knight, in reply to the fervent acknowledgments of the captain of the platform, "I have received a greater service at your hands than you at mine. But for your timely account of Wafer's death, the Archbishop would never have thought of examining my enemy, and I might have lain under the reproach of Archbishop Alan's murder to this hour."

"Look yonder, your nobleness," said Sheridan, turning round at that moment and pointing to the barbican, while a grim smile spread itself over his harsh features. As he spoke, a pike, having a human head stuck on the point, was raised above the parapet.

"A fit end for him!" said O'Madden. "The executioner might well say, 'here is the head of a traitor,' when he held up that of Christopher Perez."

"May God forgive him," said Talbot: "he was my bitter and unprovoked enemy."

"A bitter enemy, indeed," replied O'Madden; "to sacrifice hundreds of friends that never injured him, to his ill will against you alone. It must have been something stronger than mere malice that could have made him so base a traitor."

"He has paid the penalty of his treason now," said Talbot. "Let that suffice. And now, O'Madden, which of these roads shall we take?"

O'Madden, thus rebuked, confined himself to his duties as guide, and did not again mention the name of Perez during the journey. They took a south-westerly course through Kildare, towards the confines of Ofaly, where

they learned, by the report of the country on the borders of the Pale, that Lord Thomas's army was likely to be found, as he had within the last two days effected a junction with O'Connor, and was only awaiting the arrival of O'Neill from the north to march in full force upon Dublin. Talbot heard this intelligence with great regret : he had hoped to find Lord Thomas alone in the command of his own troops, and he knew how difficult it would be to urge ungrateful conditions on a man already possessed of powerful resources, and daily expecting a further accession to his strength ; bound also by engagements to others, and perhaps not altogether independent of their direction in the disposal of even his own forces. Still he had a great and sustaining confidence in the goodness of his cause, and became but the more zealously disposed as he saw his chances of success uncertain. About sunset next evening the peaceful cavalcade drew near the rebel camp. Lord Thomas's army was posted in and about a castle occupying a little plain, surrounded on three sides by bog and thicket, and defended on the fourth by a trench, staked and palisadoed, with strong gateways in the centre. A prey of upwards of a thousand head of cattle, which had been driven out of the Butler's country across the whole of O'faly, afforded the messenger of peace a guide for the last ten miles of the road, and had it not been for their timely aid, it might have proved impossible, with all their guides' knowledge of the country, to have reached their destination that night, so intricate and rugged were the paths that traversed the seemingly interminable forest surrounding it. At length, however, they drew up at the entrance to the post described above ; but Talbot was surprised to observe that the huts and tents composing the camp before him, instead of being pitched over the whole space of open ground, which was not by any means too

extensive for their exclusive occupation, were crowded closely together in one corner, while the rest of the plain appeared to have been recently occupied by similar dwellings equally straitened, for the ground was trampled and ploughed with waggon wheels, while the rude framework of many deserted huts stood here and there among scattered piles of provender, and the useless lumber of temporary cattle-sheds and stables. Two great flag-staffs rose from different quarters of the unoccupied ground, neither of them bearing any standard; but the Geraldine banner waved from a third of similar proportions, over the remaining division. Talbot was afraid to trust himself with any too favourable conjecture, so, without waiting to speculate on such a strange appearance, he demanded instant admission to the camp. The gates were readily thrown open to his party, and they advanced with their flag of truce displayed, to the tower in the centre of the little eminence where the insurgent leaders were assembled. Talbot was at once ushered into the chief apartment, a stone vaulted room, furnished with no other windows than a few narrow loop-holes, but made cheerful by a blazing hearth, and partially hung with a temporary tapestry of banners and tent canvassing. A long table bore the remains of a banquet, and round the upper end of this sat the heads of the enterprise. Lord Thomas rose, as did the rest of the party, when Talbot appeared at the door; but the rebel lord made no advance to meet him. "I come, my lord and gentlemen," said the Knight, somewhat piqued at so cold a reception, "upon a mission from men who would willingly be your friends if you will permit them. May I crave to know when your lordship will be at leisure to hear my errand?"

"Those who would have our friendship," replied Lord Thomas, "might show, methinks, somewhat more respect.

to our honour, than to require that we should treat with a man in your position, Sir John Talbot."

"My lord," replied the Knight, "I have to blame myself for not first delivering this paper, which will explain to you how my embassy cannot be considered as any disparagement to your lordship's power or quality." So saying, he presented an open letter, which he sent forward to the head of the table by an attendant.

Lord Thomas coloured deeply as he read the paper, and, ere he had quite finished its perusal, threw it on the table, and advanced with frank good will to meet and welcome his old companion.

"By my honour, Sir John," he said, grasping his hand, "I am rejoiced at these tidings; and right glad I am to be able to bid you welcome to my quarters and receive you as I could wish to welcome an old friend, and, I will add a true and worthy one, till my own miserable error, which I heartily pray you to forgive, drove you from our service in just and reasonable indignation. Uncles and gentlemen, I pray you forgive me for not first telling you that this charge against Sir John Talbot has been altogether set aside, that he is guiltless of Archbishop Alan's blood, and that the Church's excommunication has been remitted. Read the paper, Sir Oliver; it is under the hand and seal of the Primate: read it aloud, that we all may hear it."

"Sir John," cried the old Knight, cordially shaking Talbot by the hand, ere he had yet looked at the Primate's letter, "I am better pleased to hear this than if you had brought us the Gunner's head for your credentials! But surely you have not taken service with the churls? though by my honour, after the wrong you have suffered at our hands, such a course on your part should not surprise us."

"No, Sir Oliver," said Talbot, "I shall never bear arms

against your brother's banner; but I would fain be of service as a peaceful negotiator, if my Lord Thomas will but listen to such terms as I can propose."

The young lord bit his lip. "I shall not attempt to conceal from you," he said turning to Talbot, "what you may have surmised already, from the appearance of our camp. We are in no condition to reject a reasonable proposal. We have lost two powerful auxiliaries; O'Connor and O'Neill have left us to fight our battle single-handed. It is not, however, the first time I have trusted to my own House for shelter from a worse storm than I think will blow from England for a year to come. Let them go; we number two thousand of my own name and kindred, and as many more of allies less ambitious for themselves and more likely to be serviceable to their captain than these proud barbarians, that are neither fit to command nor willing to obey."

"We are well rid of them," cried another of the Fitzgeralds, who appeared to be somewhat excited by wine; "a despicable crew! They would have their bonaghts and their black mail out of Desmond! they would have us hold by coyne and livery without the Pale! 'Tis a pity that their Brehons are not sitting in Mary's Abbey portioning out Kildare among their gilly redshanks! Let the bare-legged savages go back to Dungannon, say I; we have fought our own battle before now, and can hold our patrimony without their aid!"

"Can and will, Maurice," said Sir Oliver. "So, let us forget that dissension and its ill issue; we are bound to do justice, in the first place, to this injured gentleman, by attending to his proposals; not, however, until I read this paper, as my nephew desires, that you may all know ye sit in honourable company." He then, with a loud voice, read the Archbishop's letter:—

" ' To all whom it may concern : know that we, Richard Armagh, Primate of all Ireland, having diligently inquired into the truth of certain charges, whereby Sir John Talbot, Knight, stood accused of being a partaker in the foul and sacrilegious murder of our brother of Dublin, at Artane, in July last, do find that the said Sir John Talbot, Knight, is innocent of all participation in that cruel act. Wherefore, we have remitted and abolished the unjust sentence erewhile pronounced against him for that supposed crime, by certain well-disposed but misjudging servants of the Church ; and we hereby command all churchmen of our primacy to admit the said Sir John Talbot, Knight, to the enjoyment of all such comfortable rites and consolations as the Church extends to other members of her holy communion.—Richard Armagh. Given at —' How ! Where ! what means this ? " exclaimed Sir Oliver, stopping short when he came to the address of the document. " Given at his Majesty's castle of Maynooth, this eight-and-twentieth of March ! "—Speak, Sir John, has our great stronghold fallen ! "

All turned their eyes upon Talbot awaiting his reply, and many brave men changed colour. Lord Thomas poured out a goblet of wine, and drank it off. " Speak out," he said, returning the cup, with a violent motion of his hand, to the table, " Speak out, Sir John, are we indeed too late to raise the siege ? "

" Maynooth is taken," replied Talbot : " the English stormed the place a little before sunrise yesterday."

There was a minute's dead silence ; at length Lord Thomas took his hand from his brow, to which he had unconsciously been pressing it. " It is ill news, kinsman," he said ; " but since Maynooth has fallen, we can but drink a cup of wine to the corner-stone of Rathangan ; and yet there were brave fellows in Maynooth ;

some that were both near and dear to me: but I doubt not they played their part as men should do. But now, Sir John, I would know the fate of the survivors of my people—have all been executed?" He spoke with forced calmness, but it was evident the news had crushed him sorely.

"Not all, my lord," replied the Knight. "The lieutenant of the barbican and his company made their escape."

"I little thought to hear that Art MacConnogher had turned his back upon his friends," exclaimed Lord Thomas.

"My lord, he did not fly till the place was lost past all hope of recovery; and when he did make good his retreat, it was through the ranks of the enemy, in as soldierly a sally as I ever saw given from castle gates."

"Well, be it so; but I will venture to say my warden did not leave his post while a man of *his* company stood by him."

"My lord," said Talbot, "I have some further news, which, if it be your pleasure, I would rather communicate in private, as well as the proposals which I have been directed to submit to your own judgment."

"If anything that you have to say affects yourself, Sir John," replied Fitzgerald, "I shall willingly attend you in my own apartment; but if your intelligence touches our enterprise only, I pray you to tell it openly in presence of these noble gentlemen, who are all equally concerned with myself in whatever has to do with our common cause."

"My lord, I shall have to tell you that which you would rather hear alone."

"Tell it here, in God's name, Sir John: if I play the woman I am not ashamed to let my kinsmen and friends see that I can grieve for our misfortunes."

"Then, my lord, I must tell you that you have been much deceived in your warden."

"What, did Kit not play his part like a man?"

"He played his part like a traitor, my lord, as he ever was. He sold the castle."

"Now, by the King of the Elements, Sir John," exclaimed Lord Thomas, starting to his feet, "if you have said this of my foster-brother without such proof as shall satisfy this honourable company——" But Sir Oliver, interposing, cut short the incompleted threat:—

"Nephew, sit down; remember you are at your own board; if Sir John has made this charge out of mere malice—for I know that he and Perez have long been enemies—there is no man here will more readily resent the injury done to your foster-brother, than myself; but hear him out, for, by my father's bones, I should little wonder if Perez had proved a traitor when I recall the cruelty that, but for me, he would have practised on the citizen's children that day in Preston's Inns."

"What cruelty?" cried Lord Thomas; "I never heard of any villainy that he had attempted on the citizens' children."

"Then, on my word, I have been much to blame in not telling you of it ere now, my lord," replied Sir Oliver; "he would have set the innocent infants on his breast-work to deter the gunners on the castle wall from firing into his battery, had I not, by God's good providence, come up at the moment and rescued the children from certain destruction."

"I had never heard of this," said Lord Thomas, colouring, partly with indignation at the base design, and partly with vexation at the prospect of more displeasing intelligence.

Talbot took advantage of the pause to proceed: "On

my honour, my lord, it grieves me to be the bearer of such displeasing news; but, of Perez's guilt, there can be neither doubt nor question: my lord, you are familiar with his handwriting; here are the letters addressed by him to the English captain commanding the besiegers' trenches." So saying, he took forth the letters which Sir William Brereton had read before the Deputy, and handed them to the unhappy nobleman.

Lord Thomas tore them open, and seemed to devour their contents; but he had not read more than a line or two when he saw that he had been betrayed: then his rage broke out in fierce exclamations—"By the Heaven above me, it is too true; we are sold by the accursed villain!—a thousand pounds in hand:—base traitor, was it for but a thousand pounds you betrayed your benefactor, unmindful of the tens of thousands that I and my father lavished on you? Villain! deliberate villain!" he cried, grinding his teeth with rage when he began to read the second letter; "you will show a light when they may scale the wall; you have drugged a cask of wine that the revels of the castle may be carried to a fortunate issue! Oh, fool, fool that I was to trust him! Read that, Sir Oliver; read it aloud that we may all know how we have been betrayed; and do you, Sir John, I beseech you, pardon my incredulity, for, before Heaven, I thought till now that I had no truer and more loyal servant than Christopher Perez. Remorseless wretch! to betray the master who confided in him as a friend and foster-brother!"

"From the first day I knew him, my lord," replied Talbot, "I have found him to be a malignant, envious man, and my own implacable enemy: my lord, so well as I can judge, the thousand pounds was not so much his object in betraying Maynooth, as the gratification of revenge and other worse passions which had been

thwarted by the protection afforded to me and my lady by his lieutenant of the barbican ; but as this concerns me privately, I shall take another opportunity of explaining it to your lordship."

Sir Oliver now proceeded to read the traitor's letters, and at every pause the room rang with execrations : "On my word !" cried the old knight, when he had finished, "I don't think I ever heard of so desperate a villain, except, indeed, the churl, Judas, who sold his Master. I wish him joy of his thousand pounds, with such a conscience to prick and sting him !"

"If the Church teach us aright," said Talbot, "he would now be glad to give it all for one drop of water; treachery for treachery, was his advice at the first outbreak of the war, and as he counselled so he has been dealt with."

"What, has the Gunner broken faith with him ?" exclaimed several voices.

"I left his head on a spike above the gates, when I rode from Maynooth yesterday morning," replied Talbot ; "Skeffington complied with his terms, paid the stipulated gold ; and then, contemptuously ordered him off, for instant execution."

"By my honour," said Lord Thomas, when he had concluded, "I hold myself Skeffington's debtor ; though I would rather let him reconcile such a violation of his understood agreement with his conscience, than be the man to do so myself. But come, Sir John, Maynooth is lost, and the traitor who sold it is punished ; let us now hear what terms you bring us from the conquerors."

Deeply impressed with the importance of his task, Talbot rose. "My lord," he said, addressing Lord Thomas with an earnestness of manner that at once fixed the attention of all present, "when this mission was

offered to me, I should willingly have left it to older and wiser men, whose known sagacity might have recommended their proposals to a more careful consideration than I can hope for, inexperienced as I am in the management of such grave and momentous affairs."

"The message, whatever it may be," interrupted Lord Thomas, "could not have been entrusted to one more acceptable to me, or actuated by kinder motives."

"My lord," continued Talbot, "you do me but justice. It was represented to me by one not unfriendly to the House of Kildare that any other envoy from Skeffington's camp would be less disinterested. These rapacious adventurers from England came hither influenced too often by that greed for land which seems more likely to be gratified, should the war be protracted, and result in plunder and confiscation. I at least was conscious that I had no wish to rise on the ruins of your father's house, and that my efforts on behalf of peace were honest. The fortune of war, my lord, has been adverse to you from the first. Not to dwell on an ungrateful topic by enumerating former disasters, the present week has deprived you of your two most powerful auxiliaries in the interior, and stripped you of the very keystone of your strength within the Pale. Pardon me, my lord, that I lay these calamitous events thus plainly before you ; it is far from my purpose to irritate you by dwelling on misfortunes caused by the pride or treachery of others, and for which you are in all respects blameless ; but it is my duty to point out to you, to the extent of my poor ability, the hopelessness of this enterprise, before I urge you to make those sacrifices of pride and ambition that must yet be submitted to, before the peace that in a moment of delusion, we deprived her of, can be restored to our unhappy country. The secession of O'Connor and O'Neill

has left your force inferior in numbers, in discipline, and in strength, to the trained and veteran army which Skeffington leads against you ; the fall of Maynooth has placed the key of all Kildare in the hands of your enemy, and Rathangan is but two days' march from the scene of his triumph——”

“ Your terms, your terms, Sir John ! ” exclaimed Lord Thomas, unable longer to control his impatience as he listened to this mortifying detail.

“ Alas ! my lord,” cried Talbot, “ were you in my place, I know not how otherwise you could preface the conditions which I am about to lay before you. I would they were more favourable.”

“ Let us hear them, Sir John, in God’s name,” said Sir Oliver. “ It were useless for us to deny that we are willing to listen to reason.”

“ The first item,” said Talbot, taking forth his instructions, “ is, that you shall disband your troops, and dismiss each man to his home, on taking an oath never to bear arms again against his Majesty.”

“ A very fair condition,” said Sir Oliver.

“ Ay, and when we have parted with our strength, what then ? ” inquired Lord Thomas.

“ That all your military accoutrements, artillery, munition and stores be given up to the Lord Deputy, or such other persons as he may appoint to receive them.”

“ Good ; what next ? ”

“ That you, my lord, with your uncles, Sir Oliver and Sir John Fitzgerald, do publicly, at a place to be appointed by the Lord Deputy, make your submissions, and render up to the royal commissioners all your estates of whatever kind, to be disposed of at the King’s pleasure ; being guaranteed, out of the royal exchequer, to yourself,

SER. III.

R

my lord, a yearly pension of one thousand marks; and to the rest, by the year, one hundred marks respectively; also that you shall render up Sir James De la Hyde and Master Burnel, unconditionally."

"And in return?"

"Life and liberty, my lord."

"And are these the terms which you proffer to my father's son!" exclaimed Lord Thomas, starting up in uncontrolled indignation. "I tell you, sooner shall this hand be chopped off by the axe of the hangman, than set sign or seal to such monstrous and insulting conditions! What! disband my troops to return to homes already portioned out to Cheshire or Kentish clowns! give up the arms by which they must win themselves a heritage from the natives of the interior, or defend the portion that good-will may assign them there, when driven out of their old holdings on our forfeited estates! Would you have us come in with halters round our necks, and lay our swords at the feet of a base churl, the proxy of a false and lascivious tyrant! Give up the broad plains of Kildare, won by our noble ancestors with their good swords from kings and princes, to be plotted out to undertakers and beggarly adventurers at so much the rood, with a clause that no natives be permitted on the land! What! see my noble kinsmen reduced to be pensioners on Henry Tudor's bounty! give up my honourable and faithful friends, who have stood by me with loyal constancy through the worst of times, to be dealt with as felons by a corrupt Chief Justice! Who dares require of me to sheath my sword while this cruel tyrant holds my father in captivity, and denies a free and honourable pardon to us who took up arms, as we believed, to avenge his death, falsely reported as it was by his own minions? Never! I refuse my assent to conditions so insulting to a man of

honour!" He sat down amidst loud plaudits from his kinsmen and associates.

Talbot rose in reply. "Good, my lord," he said: "remember that I am here as the envoy of their framers, not as being in any way the adviser or suggester of these hard conditions. Severe although they be, my lord, they are by no means so unjust as your indignation has led you at first sight to consider them. If your disbanded soldiery want homes on their return, there are the King's levies into which they may, every man, be drafted within a month. Submission is I know a galling word to a proud spirit; but, my lord, you are aware that the prime nobility and the kings and chiefs of the land, have often submitted themselves to the King's Deputy; and, so that he be the representative of royalty, what matters his name or lineage? My lord, Roderick O'Connor was not ashamed to bend his knee to your great ancestor, though he was king of all Ireland. To be pensioners on the royal bounty is openly desired by many of the chief nobility of England; yet far be it from me to recommend dependence on such a stipend, because it is scarce counted dishonourable among strangers. I would seek to reconcile you to some further consideration of this proposal, by setting its decent provision in comparison with the precarious estate of outlawry. I have spoken, my lord, of your honour and interest; it behoves me now to tell you of higher reasons why you should not reject such chances of reconciliation with the state as the fortunes of war have left you. My lord, I will speak freely, for I feel honestly concerned for all parties: it is your duty, my lord, as a Knight and a Christian, since you have kindled strife and contention among your fellow-countrymen for the sake of avenging a wrong that was never done to you—it is your bounden duty, I say, now that you have been un-

deceived, to make amends to the outraged peace of your country, even though in doing so you should have to sacrifice both fortune and liberty. You bared the sword, my lord, to take vengeance for your noble father's supposed murder. Alas! your obstinacy in refusing to sheathe it when that error was discovered, has wrought a worse calamity than the evil which you drew it to avenge——”

“How so, Sir John! Speak—what has happened to my father?”

“I have sorrowful tidings to impart, Lord Thomas. The noble Earl of Kildare lives no longer! This aimless and hopeless war has broken the heart of the princely Gerald. It is a cruel fate which has made me the bearer of this intelligence. He was, as a parent to me. I loved him as a son, and deeply mourn his loss.” Lord Thomas sat for a minute struggling to suppress his emotion, but in vain. He rose abruptly and left the apartment. A general outbreak of lamentation followed, and Talbot sat down overcome with the effect of his own announcement, and half-reproached himself that he had not made it more delicately.

Lord Thomas returned in a few minutes, his face showing traces of recent tears, and with much dignity, advanced to the head of the table. His manner was calm and sad, but his bearing evinced to all that his determination was taken. “Sir John Talbot, kinsmen, and gentlemen,” he began, “it were idle in me to pretend that I could hear of a parent’s death without such emotion as must for a time interrupt any deliberation on other affairs; yet, ere I retire, I would apprise you that, in the matter before us, there will be no need to resume the arguments on either side. Take back my defiance to the framer of these insolent demands,” he said turning to Talbot,

"and tell Sir William Skeffington, that when I make my submission to him, there will be no need of stipulating for my people's pardon; I mistake them much if any of them will stand in need of favour at his hands when that day comes. And, as for the representations of duty which you have made to me; believe me, so far as they proceed from yourself, I thank you heartily; but, with regard to those who sent you, tell them that my duty makes me consider them as much the murderers of my father, now that they have done him to death by their cruel injustice towards me, as I did on that day when Archbishop Alan maliciously spread the rumour of his having fallen beneath the axe of their executioner. Your mission is ended, Sir John; and I would not have it renewed. If I have given you offence in aught that I have said, forgive me; we have all been sorely tried this evening. You will sup with my kinsmen, Sir John—it will be but a melancholy meal; yet, such as it is, I give thanks to God that I have it by the bounty of neither King nor Viceroy. Sir John, farewell; and if you like your fare, remember that while there are streams in Desmond and woods upon Slieve Logher, I shall never want a board as independently supplied, and at which you will always be welcome, for the sake of him that is gone." He wrung Talbot's hand and withdrew. His uncles accompanied him, and left the knight, but not without the expression of much regret, to meditate over his disappointments until their promised return at supper.

Talbot would have taken his departure, but that he still hoped, when the first ebullition of grief was past, to have another opportunity of conversing with Lord Thomas on the engrossing subject of his thoughts and wishes. But the greater number of gentlemen among whom he had been left were Fitzgeralds; and although their gloomy

prospects, combined with this melancholy intelligence of the decease of the great head of their house, rendered their conversation, during the absence of the elder knights, somewhat sad ; yet as Talbot had been known to many of them before quitting the service of Kildare, they gave him opportunity enough to forget his anxiety in relating their several adventures and changes of fortune since they had last met.

At length Sir Oliver returned. “ I crave your pardon, fair Sirs,” he said ; “ but my nephew has been so much moved by this news, that ’tis only now I have thought it right to leave him. God rest poor Gerald’s soul ! he was a good man and a brave man ; and a better brother, I am bold to say, never broke bread among his kindred. But we must all die ; and although I would rather than a year, and a day added to my own time that Gerald had died in harness—my curse on these churls’ bolts and fettters !—yet, since it has been God’s will so to take him, let us not repine. So ho, ye knaves, spread the board for supper, and tell Neale Roe that I desire his presence here with the harp. Come, Sir John, drink a cup of wine with me for the sake of the days when I used to nurse you on my knee under the old beech tree in Maynooth gardens.”

“ God be with the time ! ” cried Talbot, pledging the worthy knight in a full goblet. “ But ah ! Sir Oliver, there is no seat under the old beech-tree now ; the English cut it down to make room for their breaching battery.”

“ Well, let it go,” replied Sir Oliver ; “ it will not burn a whit the less merrily for the taint of the churl’s hatchet, and some good fellow’s hearth may yet be all the brighter by its fall. But, now that I think of it, I remember that my father used to repeat an ancient prophecy which connected the fall of our House with that of the tree—I cannot recall the words—but if we were to heed all the

idle omens and blind prophesies about the downfall of the Geraldine for these ten years past, we should spend but an uneasy time in the present. Blessed be God, it has not come to housing in the cow's belly with us yet!"

"In the cow's belly, Sir Oliver? What mean you by that?"

"How, Sir John, heard you never the old rhyme,

'When five brothers go
I' the belly of the cow,
Clan Gerald's day of doom
Is come?'"

"Not I, by my faith," said Talbot; "but she will be a lusty heifer that fulfils your fate, if it is to happen in your generation, Sir Oliver."

"By my troth, I think she would soon be fain to drop her calves," replied the old knight. "John, James, Rickard, Walter, and myself, have an old custom of making free elbow-room, go where we will. But Heaven knows—I cannot tell what to think of these things falling out as they often do. We are just five brothers, now that Gerald (God rest his soul) is gone." He paused for a moment, and proceeded: "But come, Sir John, and kinsmen, you see the best we can place before you; fall to with what appetite you can; for, come what may, a man made never the worse fight, either against grief or handy blows for having his stomach well lined with good munition of venison and Spanish wine."

Notwithstanding his recommendation, poor Sir Oliver scarce touched the good cheer set before him: his heart was full; and though he neglected no observance of the rights of hospitality, the tear was in his eye throughout. At length when the sorrowful repast was over, he poured out a goblet of wine and gave it to an attendant to bear to Neale Roe, the bard, who sat at the further end

of the table, next to the lowest of the gentlemen of the Geraldine name.

"The harp is silent on the hearth, son of Kennedy," said he, in Irish, "and our hearts are low in our breasts. Drink a strong draught to the memory of Gerald that will never listen to the voice of strings again; then let your fingers go forth on the wire, swiftly, sweetly, clearly-ringing, till either the smiles come back to our countenances, or the tears that oppress our hearts flow upward with their weight of sorrow, and pour it from our eyes upon the ground."

The bard took the goblet, and, rising, stood beside his harp. The flickering brands at his feet threw his tall figure and wild costume into strong relief as he stood beneath the brace of the black-browed, overarching chimney. He looked round, and, raising the cup, drained it in silence and at a single draught. A few drops fell from the reversed goblet as his arm sank slowly again to his side, while he leaned abstractedly over his instrument, as if gathering his fancies for the coming lamentation; but suddenly raising his head, and shaking back the long red bands of his glibb, that had partially fallen over his brow, he extended the cup again, and exclaimed.

"I drank to Gerald of the open hand, and the wine has not melted my soul to lamentation. My heart, among the strong wine, still burns like the hot iron when the son of the hammer has plunged it in a too shallow stream. Fill the cup again! for I will now drink a health; and that neither in silence nor in sorrow, but freely, loudly, and joyfully!" The cup was speedily replenished; and Neale Roe, seizing his harp, without prelude or preface, burst forth with this strain in Irish:—

“ Health to the wolf of the red forest of Bawn Regan !
 Hither, wild dog of the woods, and do his errand who
 drinks to you in Spanish wine.
 Eastward through the plain of Liffey a day’s journey,
 and the smell of carrion will guide you to May-
 nooth :
 There’s a dead man in the castle ditch ; there is no head
 upon his shoulders ;
 Drag him out upon the bank, and tear him in four
 quarters !
 Give his limbs to your cubs to carry to the four forests
 of Ireland ;
 But hide his heart in a hole ; taste it not, for it is full
 of poison ;
 It would poison the wolf in his famine ; it is the heart
 of him who betrayed his foster-brother !

“ Health to the crow of the red shambles of Moyslaght !
 Hither black gorger of flesh, and do his errand who
 drinks to you in Spanish wine.
 Eastward over the plain of Liffey a three-hours’ flight,
 and the smell of carrion will guide you to May-
 nooth :
 There’s a head on a spike over the castle gate : there is
 no back-bone under it :
 Pluck off the hair of the head, and scatter it to the four
 winds of heaven !
 Pluck out the two eyes of the head, and give them to
 the callow brood of the two shambles of Ireland ;
 But hide his tongue in a hole ; taste it not, for it is full
 of lies ;
 It would deceive the crow before rain ; it is the tongue
 of him who betrayed his foster-brother !

“ Health to the wolves and carrion crows of Ireland !
 Come at the cry of *Croom aboo !* and do his errand who
 drinks to you in Spanish wine.
 There will be trunks of traitors and heads of the false
 churls of London
 Lying thick upon the ground under the sharp strokes
 of victorious Clan Gerald ;

Pluck forth the heart of the traitor; may it be a sweet morsel in the jaws of the wolf of Bawn Regan!

Pluck forth the tongue of the false Englishman; in such be the beak of the crow of Moyslaght bathed abundantly!

Partake, without fear of poison or deceit, of each portion of the banquet that we will spread before you,

For there never lived in the world but one man that betrayed his foster-brother!"

Fierce and vehement was the applause that burst forth on all sides as Neale Roe concluded: but the bard sank his head upon his breast, and seemed too much absorbed in thought, to notice the effect of his performance. He remained for a few minutes motionless and silent; then, taking his harp again, without raising his head, he touched the strings in a low, mournful strain that at once hushed the assembly. The music grew clearer and sweeter as it proceeded, till, catching the recurrence of the measure where the air was most plaintively tender, Red Kennedy lifted up his voice and countenance together, and sang again, in Irish:—

" Health to the fair dove of the green waving groves of Moyliffe!

Hither, clear shooting star of the woods, and do his errand who pledges you in bitter tears;

Eastward with the course of the ships; and the ringing of hammers will guide you

To where the churls are forging chains for your people in the black Massey Mor of London.

There is a corpse there before the chapel altar: his mouth is sealed with the oil of peace,

And his hands clasped over the cross of his salvation.

Alight at his bier head, fair voyager of the dews of morning,

And whisper the message of my heart in the ear of the mighty Gerald.

" Son of Garret Mor, I weep not that death has unlocked
your prison ;
For better all the clay of the earth upon your breast,
than one closed door between your warm heart and
the friends you loved.
I weep not that my nation have been left without their
head of protection ;
For, proudly where the old tree stood the young branch
of nobleness still spreads his shelter over the people.
I weep not that the fire is quenched on the broad
hearthstone of your father's dwelling ;
For the deeds of a traitor move not the tears of indig-
nant men :
But I weep, and my tears fall faster and hotter,
When I think that Gerald of the open hand was left to
die alone in a land of strangers !

" Oh, had I been with you ! these hands should have
attended you ;
This voice should have soothed you with the songs you
used to ask for by night !
But your attendant was the rude son of the fetterlock ;
The hands of the rough jailer wiped the cold moisture
from your brow ;
No kindly nurse to hold the cup of refreshment to
your lips,
Nor word of comfort till the good priest bade you pre-
pare for the road to heaven—
Oh, my sweet master, that I had been with you !
Your eyes should never have been closed by the hands
of a stranger !

" My tears are dried up : there are martial trumpets
sounding
In the midst of the camp of the silken-vested son of
Gerald ;
There are iron breastplates flashing in the light of a
hundred watch fires,
And the eager neighing of war horses in a thousand
stalls :

There are strong kerns without, with battle-axes, broad-bladed and blue-shining :

There are noble gentlemen within, with heads of wise counsel and undaunted hearts of valour—

Son of Garret Mor, I will not weep; there will soon be tears enough of Saxon widows

Bewailing the day that saw you left to die alone in a land of strangers!"

The music had grown louder and more rapid in the last stanza; and although, in the preceding parts of the lay, there were few present who had not been in tears, the approbation, at its conclusion, was as fiercely vehement as before. "Let my cousin Thomas but give me fifty men," cried one of the Fitzgeralds, starting to his feet, "and I will make a dash into the Pale to-night! There's a garrison of churls in Tristledermot, and I'll lay my gold chain to a kern's belt, that I bring in a score of their heads before this time to-morrow!"

"Get to your bed, Maurice," said Sir Oliver; "the wine and grief are turning your brain. 'Fore God, I think we had all better get to bed," he continued, rising, and brushing a tear from his eyes; "we have a hard day's riding before us to-morrow, and I am myself ill able to keep up a revel after the sad intelligence which has reached us this evening." On this they broke up, and Talbot retired to his quarters for the night.

Next morning, he could not but reproach himself for the ill success of his mission. Many arguments now suggested themselves that he might have urged; many oversights also, and faults of judgment, as it seemed to him, in the manner of his putting those he had already used. He therefore besought a second interview with Lord Thomas: but, so far as the prospect of accommodation was concerned, with the same ill success as before. "Well, my lord," he said, when he had exhausted every argument,

"I can but thank you for your courtesy in listening to me so long, and relieve you of the subject, which I well believe is a disagreeable one to you."

"It is a distressing one, Sir John," replied Fitzgerald, "firmly believing as I do that my father has been made away with by foul means, to enable these rapacious enemies of my house to confiscate the whole Geraldine possessions. But enough of this. You said, Sir John, you could explain some private reasons that induced you to think this ingrate Perez did not betray me so much for the sake of money as for other causes,"

"My lord, you are aware we both sought the same lady's hand in marriage."

"And is it possible that mere jealousy should have urged him to an act so desperate?"

"It urged him, my lord, to the commission of a much more heinous sin."

"How can that be, Sir John? I know no greater sin than ingratitude like his."

"In a word, my lord, the same enmity that drove him to betray your castle, for the purpose of handing me over to the civil power as one of Alan's murderers, had already instigated him to fix the imputation of that crime on me by a still more desperate act of villainy. It was he himself who was the third murderer; he confessed it, my lord: he said he could not bear to see me united to the woman who had scorned him; and to be revenged, he stole my sword and dagger that night as they were taking the Archbishop away, and, entering in the dark with Teling and Wafer, left one weapon in the prelate's body and threw the other under or behind my bed as he escaped; so that till God's fit time to clear me, I lay under the imputation of blood guiltiness and sacrilege."

"I have been greatly deceived!" exclaimed Lord

Thomas; "human nature is a worse thing than I ever thought it to be before. But, now that he has gone to his account, Sir John, I pray God to forgive him, and to grant you long life and peace for the enjoyment of your recovered reputation. I must bid you farewell, as I have to ride this morning on urgent affairs towards MacCoghlan's country. Remember what I told you last night; and if ever you grow weary of their cabals and knaveries within the Pale, count on a sure welcome with me and my merry men wherever we may be."

"Farewell, my lord; may God grant us all a happy issue out of this wild enterprise!" cried Talbot, wringing the hand of Lord Thomas. A few minutes after, each gallant gentleman was mounted, and at the head of his respective party riding in opposite directions through the forest.

Talbot had scarce journeyed ten miles from the camp, when his little troop was thrown into some confusion by the approach of a considerable body of footmen, who in their turn, startled at the sight of English cavalry, halted, and threw themselves into close order right across the road, which wound through steep banks on either side, forming a pass of considerable strength. "They are the advanced guard of the Lord Deputy's army," said one; "he always puts his kern to that service."

"In my mind, they are MacCoghlan's men," replied another.

"More likely the MacGillpatricks out of Ossory," said a third; "for I heard that the Lord Butler, whom they serve, was expected in the borders of Kildare this week."

"Push on," cried Talbot; "neither Fitzpatrick nor MacCoghlan ever had such a battle of galloglass as that under his banner! I should know the march of my own old troop as far as I could distinguish footmen from

cavalry. So ho, Art," he cried, riding up, "you are making a full leisurely retreat."

"*Chorp an Chriost, Sir John,*" exclaimed the son of Connogher; "how came your nobleness here? I never thought to see you a living man again!"

"You will hear the whole story from Neale Roe when you reach the camp," replied the knight; "I doubt not but he will have my adventure set in choice verse by the time you arrive. Meanwhile, Art, I must push on, for I bear urgent news for the Lord Deputy. I must, besides, arrange to have our friend Norah sent in safety to your quarters."

Art smiled, and pointed to a horse litter, which Talbot had not before observed in the rere. "Norah's term of service was up, Sir John," said he, "when she left the bantierna safe at Saint Mary's. We had fled in that direction to deceive the churls, and fell in with them just as they reached the abbey gates; so I thought it better to make sure and bring her on with me. She is yonder with little Feargus, safe and sound, in the old litter. By the hand of my body, it has been the useful vehicle!"

Talbot rode up, and having learned that Ellen was safe with the abbess, presented little Feargus with his dagger, and with a general *banaght leat*, and a parting assurance to Barry Oge that he had not taken service with the churls, left his old comrades to pursue their way to the rebel camp, and pushed on with his own company as fast as the rugged nature of the roads would permit. But when he arrived at Maynooth, the Lord Deputy was gone with a body of cavalry to Tristledermot. Hither he followed him; but he was again late; Skeffington had started for Dublin the evening before. To Dublin, then, the knight bent his course; and on the seventh day from the date of his commission, laid the result of it before the

Deputy and Council. This duty performed, Sir John's next anxiety was for some means of supporting the rank which he and his wife must now assume among their equals. In the friendship of Cromer he had every trust, and he knew that, for the present, they could experience no difficulty; but when he began to reflect on the necessity of providing for the future, he was obliged to confess to himself that the prospect was dark enough to justify even more melancholy forebodings than he felt disposed to indulge in. Pondering these thoughts, he rode slowly from the Castle towards Christ Church for the road to Hoggin Green was blocked up by some workmen repairing the Dame's Gate, and he had to go round by Francis-street to make his way thither. When he came to Skinner's-row, he could not resist the desire of taking a passing look at the house of his friend, the ruined merchant, for whose liberation he had been laying many plans during the last two days; but he was struck with great astonishment to see the front of Master Harvey's warehouse exhibit precisely the same appearance it had presented when he last saw that worthy trader. There were the identical bales and boxes, the cases of cutlery and piles of rich armour—all as if the last year had passed in the space of a single day. A porter, as was usual at the hour, was sprinkling the dusty footpath from a jar of water. He started back with a look of joyful recognition when he saw the knight, and ran into the warehouse exclaiming—"By all that is wonderful, Master Harvey, here is Master O'Regan—I beg his nobleness's pardon—Sir John Talbot himself at the door!" Next moment Talbot's hand was in the grasp of the good merchant.

"Why, Master Harvey," he exclaimed, "how is this? I thought you were a ruined man!"

"Come in, come in, Sir John, and I will tell you all,"

cried Harvey, his countenance bright with extreme good humour. "Marry, there are some here that you will be glad to see. But, Sir John, as I am a true man, I have been searching for you throughout Ireland for the last three months, but all in vain : Drogheda, Armagh, Kells—not a town in Oriel or Meath that I have not ransacked in search of you."

"I can answer for that," said Peter ; "it was between Kells and Raheen I lost your honour's track last; and if you but knew the handling I met with on the road—But no matter; I may sing with the rogue—they called him Sheridan—that travelled the last stage with me—

'I through Ireland twice have walked,
Once besides through Moatogrenge.'"

"Hold, your peace, sirrah," said the merchant, "and lead round his nobleness's horse."

"But, Master Harvey, I have not yet seen my wife, who lies at the abbey."

"Why, to tell you the truth, Sir John, when Mrs. Harvey heard that she was there, she would not rest till the good lady abbess consented to let her come to us for a season; and there was, too, as I believe, some report of fever going among the sisters; so that, in fact, my Lady Talbot is up stairs."

"Fever! she is well, I trust?"

"As well, Sir John, as heart could wish; but before you go to her I must tell you, that all is well here too;" and he pointed to the cabinet in which he had deposited the jewels. "So wronged a man you never heard of as I have been, Sir John; but thanks be to God, I am out of their clutches now, and God bless the good Archbishop of Armagh, say I; if it had not been for him, I should have been a beggared man this day. But I will tell you all about the charges they brought against me, and how I

SER. III.

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cleared myself before the whole council, when we have time to sit down by-and-bye; for I see a friend of yours coming here that must speak with you first."

It was Dame Keating. "Kinsman, can you forgive me?" she said, coming forward with her brother from the inner apartment.

Talbot extended a hand to each with frank good will. "Forgive you, Dame Margaret?" he said; "I must be at war with all the world if I resent what you once thought of me; and, Father Thomas, it would take good cause to make me quarrel with you after the good service you did me that day in Saint Patrick's!" Here Dame Harvey came forth smiling, and with an air of considerable importance. "Ah, dame," cried the knight, taking the hand she held out, and cordially saluting her, "it was not thus we parted that day I left you sprinkling little Jeniko with the sprig of rosemary! Ha! Jeniko, my little friend, where is he?"

"Jeniko is gone out to play," said Mistress Harvey; "but here is another little friend you never saw before"—she uncovered the face of a baby in her arms as she spoke—"and yet I'll be bound," she continued, while her eyes glistened with matronly pleasure, "you would rather have his little finger than Jeniko's whole body."

"He is a boy, then," said Talbot, speaking low, and bending to kiss his son, while a tide of emotions that he had never felt before, flowed in upon his heart.

"A brave boy, may God bless him!" exclaimed Dame Keating; "and may God forgive me the rash word I spoke to his and to his mother's prejudice!"

"I remember that word well, Dame Margaret," said Talbot, "and I will forgive it to you on one condition."

"What is that, kinsman? and it will go hard with me but I will fulfil it."

"If I can get a priest to christen my boy, Dame Margaret, you must stand his godmother."

"Proud and happy I shall be to do that Sir John!" exclaimed the good woman, much gratified; and if I stand godmother for the dear infant, who is to be my gossip?"

"Choose him, dame," cried Talbot; "I lay it on you as a double expiation."

"I could not choose a better sponsor to answer for the child's being made what an honest man should be," said Dame Keating, "than here;" and she held out her hand to Master Harvey.

The merchant coloured and hesitated, as this was an honour for which he was unprepared; but Talbot seconded his gossip's election so cordially that he at length consented. "But," said he, with a conscious glance at Mistress Harvey, "methinks, Sir John, my Lady Talbot ought to be consulted."

"I will answer for her," said the knight; "but if she should object to anything, *you* know, Master Harvey, who will have to yield. But it is now my turn to fulfil my part of the contract. Father Thomas, you will not fail me in this time of need?"

"God forbid, my son," said Keating; "and when shall we have the christening?"

"The sooner the better, by all means," said Talbot; "and if Mistress Harvey will but help me to find his mother, I shall bring you the time and the name without delay."

The knight returned soon after, and announced that all would be ready for the ceremony in an hour; "and since we are all loyal subjects now, Master Harvey," he said, "we think there can be no harm in calling the boy after

a noble gentleman, who I wish was out of his troubles as happily as we are. We shall call the infant, if it please you, Thomas Gerald."

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Somewhat more than a year after these events, a crowd had collected to witness the sailing of a vessel from Dudley's wharf. The ship was at some distance from land, when a cavalier rode down from the Dame's Gate and cordially accosted a citizen who was returning from the river side. "Good morning, Master Harvey, and is my fair gossip well?"

"Well, Sir John—quite well: and how is my godson, and my Lady Talbot, and the little girl?"

"All as happy as the day is long; and *Tomás Oge* grown a stirring blade, I promise you. But what is this bustle at the wharf, Master Harvey?"

"Ah, Sir John, this comes of burying yourself in the woods: have you not heard tidings of the peace, at Disert yet?"

"Not I, by my faith; but it is pleasant news to hear at any time. What terms has Lord Thomas obtained?"

"A pardon, Sir John—a free pardon and promise of advancement: my Lord Grey, our new Deputy, and he, took the sacrament together in open camp."

"By my honour I am rejoiced to hear it! And does Lord Thomas go to England?"

"He has gone already, Sir John, and his uncles follow him to-day."

"What! was it their embarkment you were witnessing?"

"It was, Sir John; and though they have such security as I tell you, they seemed right loth to go: by the mass, they are five tall gentlemen."

"What! have all five set sail for England?"

"One and all, Sir John; Sir Oliver shook hands with me as he was going on board."

"Master Harvey, do you know the name of that vessel?"

"Marry, Sir John, the Cow. She had good need to steer clear of the Bull," said Harvey, laughing at his own jest upon the name of the great sandbank where Alan's barque had been wrecked: but Talbot sighed; for he remembered the prophecy of which Sir Oliver Fitzgerald had told him that night in Lord Thomas's camp.

"Alas!" he said, as he turned his horse's head towards home, "I fear these gallant gentlemen are doomed to the block! Such has been the end of our Irish Rebellions from the first; and such now, if tyranny and treachery remain as close friends as they have been of late, will be the end of the Rebellion of Silken Thomas."

"So, then," said Turlogh, "I think I have redeemed my promise, though I have not yet shown you Lord Thomas's head upon London Bridge,"

"And he was beheaded after all?" said Art.

"Hanged and quartered at Tyburn, with his five uncles, and their heads set upon six spikes, as I tell you," replied the bard.

"And did not Lord Grey choke upon the sacramental bread?" asked Henry.

"He was beheaded himself the next year," replied Turlogh.

"A fit end for the traitor!" exclaimed Art; "he was almost as bad as Perez."

"I wish we had Neale Roe here, to sing his obsequies," said Henry.

"I wish I had all of their kidney in Ireland, for one half hour in Barronsmore!" said Red Hugh, bitterly.

"But what became of Burnel?" asked Henry.

"He was hanged at Tyburn," said Turlogh.

"And Father Travers?"

"Hanged at Tyburn, too."

"And De la Hyde and Power?"

"Fled into Scotland and Portugal, and there died."

"And what was the name of Lady Talbot's daughter, Turlogh?"

"On that point, my prince, history is silent," said the bard; "but I think they could not have done better than call her after her mother."

THE END THIRD SERIES.

22

17

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